

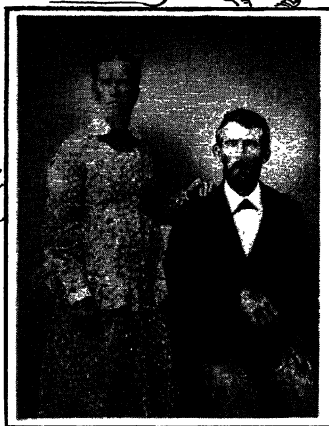
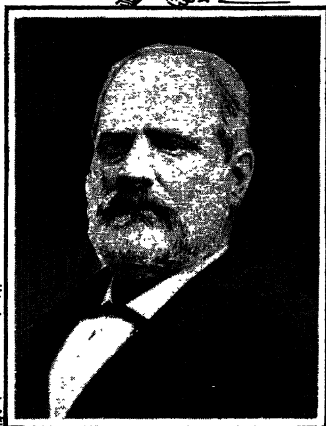
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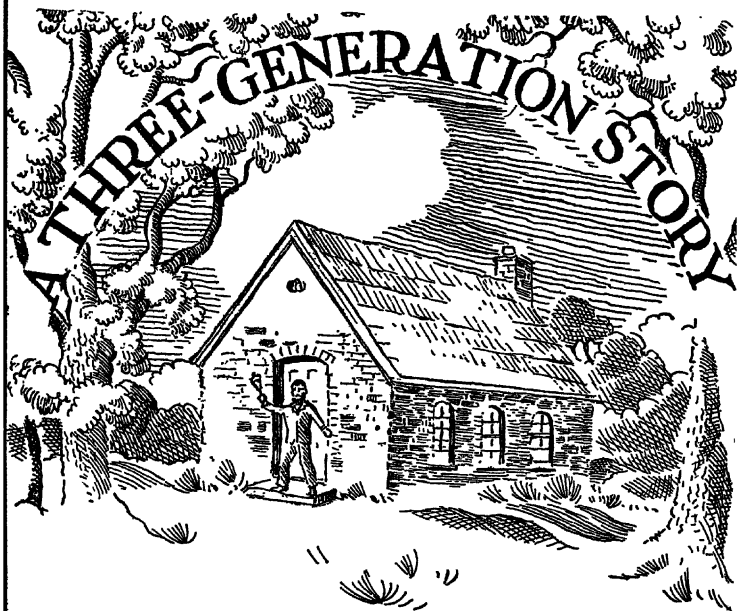
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SCHOOLMASTER
OF YESTERDAY



The Kennedy Family Album. Thomas, *upper left*; Delilah and Benjamin, *upper right*; Millard and Ola, *below*.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY



1820

1919

by Millard Fillmore Kennedy

in collaboration with ALVIN F. HARLOW

ILLUSTRATED BY HOWARD SIMON

WHITTLESEY HOUSE

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Contents

1. THREE MEN AND A CENTURY	3
2. GRANDFATHER IS CALLED	6
3. KENTUCKY BEGINNINGS	12
4. THE GREAT MIGRATION	28
5. HOMESTEADING IN INDIANA	37
6. HORNET REFORMERS	47
7. GRANDMOTHER'S INHERITANCE	55
8. DOCTORIN'	63
9. THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER	71
10. THE SECOND GENERATION	88
11. NEMESIS OVERTAKES URIAH	99
12. NEW HORIZONS	116
13. COMMUNITY LEADER	124
14. THE NATURE LOVER	132
15. YELLOW JACKET	143
16. THE GENTLE BRUISER	148
17. BARRING OUT	160
18. MANDY'S DEMONSTRATION	171

CONTENTS

19. THE CRISIS	184
20. I MEET THE OLD FOLKS	203
21. I ACQUIRE LEARNING	216
22. COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT	233
23. WERE THEY UNCONSTITUTIONAL?	247
24. I GO TO COLLEGE	260
25. NEW PHASES OF LIFE	273
26. ROTATION IN OFFICE	289
27. RABBITS AND BASEBALL	295
28. CHRISTMAS AND ALL THAT	309
29. PROBLEMS	321
30. THE END OF THE ROAD	347

SCHOOLMASTER
OF YESTERDAY

THREE MEN AND A CENTURY

.....

WE KENNEDYS were a dynasty of schoolteachers—three generations of us, our sway extending from 1820 to 1919; just one year short of a century. It was thoughtless of me to resign only one year before rounding out the hundred, but engrossed by affairs of the moment, the matter of making a record just didn't occur to me. I might add that our incumbencies overlapped, so that our total teaching years, including my Aunt Caroline's, amounted to somewhere near 140. But with me the dynasty ended, for my son has not chosen education for his life's work.

When we took up the rod of office we were precocious youngsters. Grandpa, the most mature of the three male teachers, was twenty, I was nineteen, while Father was only seventeen, with cheeks still downy and full stature not yet attained. I am not sure how old Aunt Caroline was when she began teaching, but she was somewhere near the verge of womanhood. Of course not one of us had had a day of professional training for such work. Nevertheless, Grandfather and I were both invited into the service by the school patrons, who regarded us as eminently qualified. Father and my aunt went into it of

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

their own accord, but had little trouble in finding places. When these three elders began their work, there was not even the semblance of an examination to test their ability and aptitude.

As a small boy I remember my father, with books under his arm, striding away with yard-long steps on a nippy winter morning toward District School No. 3. This school stood only a few rods distant from our rural Indiana home. During the day if the wind blew toward our house it carried with it the indistinct hum of children reciting their lessons in chorus. And we knew it was recess time when their hum changed to shouts of joy. The pupils were playing Anty-over or starting out in mad pursuit of Ben Kennedy, who acted the part of the fox in a game of Fox and Hounds.

In the frosty dusk of evening Father would return, striding homeward in his well-greased boots. Then he would seize me and toss me in the air as if I had been a month-old puppy.

And at supper and afterward, there would most likely be gossip of his day's work and of the neighborhood, news which had come to him through his pupils or which concerned them; Jimmy Wilkins' mother was down sick; the Beanes were all laid up with malaria again, and no wonder, living down in that creek bottom; Bill Larkin was going to quit school and go to work in a store; Mandy Bauerle was doing no good in her books—too much boy on her mind; and so on.

Now and then, when he mused aloud on some particularly vexatious problem of behavior or reported having had to whale the daylights out of some strapping

THREE MEN AND A CENTURY

misdemeanant, my stocky, handsome Grandpa, with his clipped white beard, would settle back in his chair and say, "Now, when *I* was teaching school. . . ."

Grandfather's earlier years of teaching were passed in Kentucky, but the major part of our work was done in central Indiana. Our three lifetimes witnessed an evolution from the most primitive type of American school, the isolated one-room log building with earthen floor and backless benches to the modern, small-city type, with all the rural district schools eliminated and one central, well-equipped plant for a township, and everybody riding to it in a bus.

In that ninety-nine years we saw new horizons appear, saw our nation reach westward to the Pacific, saw the boundless forest replaced by farms and municipalities; we saw a new America built and American social life and education change almost beyond conception, especially in the towns. In the country, when I finally put away my textbooks, there was still discernible a faint tang of our old pioneer atmosphere—but it, too, was fading rapidly before the pungent breath of the automobile.

We Kennedys may not have set the world afire in our century of progress, but we all toiled hard and honestly, I think, at the job of community leadership which was ours *ex officio*, and our friends, patrons and superior officers seemed to think we did pretty well with it.

GRANDFATHER IS CALLED

.....

THE Kennedys had traditions and ingrained habits. For example, there was at least one Thomas in every generation. The first Kentucky Kennedy, one of those Thomases, came out from Virginia in the spring of 1776 just to look things over. His father when a boy had been kidnapped from Ireland and sold in America as a bond servant. Having served out his time he became in later years a physician and, like so many other former bondmen, a respected and useful citizen.

Well, Thomas liked Kentucky, but he went back to Virginia in the fall and did not return with his family until 1779. Then he came over the mountains, braving the Indian peril, with his wife and four children, the oldest only seven, and four or five animals, equine and bovine. Thomas's tools—he was both brick mason and carpenter—were packed on the horses and steers.

But they started too late in the season, the autumn was dry, and in the mountains the forage was so scarce that the animals gave out, one by one, and died by the trail side; and along with them, some tools and other goods had to be abandoned. Long before they reached Boones-

GRANDFATHER IS CALLED

boro, there were only a mare and a steer left. The horse bore three children, the two younger being slung in baskets on each side, and the ox carried some bedding, while Kennedy and his wife walked, he packing the youngest child of all on his back.

To make things worse, the horse stumbled and fell, breaking the older boy's leg. With emergency splints upon it, they pushed on to Boonesboro. Within a short time,



Thomas helped to build Strode's Station, a community fort near the site of Winchester; and there the family spent the terrible winter of 1779-1780, so severe that the settlers had to eat their stock, and corn sold at from \$50 to \$125—continental money—per bushel.

In the spring, Thomas's wife died, and shortly afterward, one of the children. The worst feature of pioneer life was not its physical hardships and deprivations, its menace from savage men and animals, but less spectacular affliction like this, bereavement which might have been avoided had there been medical care and comfort available, but which for lack of these wrought as it

would, while the sorrowing pioneer sat with helpless hands and bitterness of soul and watched the loved one die.

Thomas preempted land, some of the finest rolling bluegrass land on the continent, for himself and his two brothers, still back in Virginia. One of the brothers never came; he was captured at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781, and literally starved to death on a British prison ship. His sons, however, came to Kentucky and added themselves and their families to the Kennedy colony, through whose land flowed a stream which is called Kennedy's Creek to this day.

The first Kennedys had scarcely gotten well settled on their land when they found themselves in a newly organized county, christened Bourbon—in honor of the French kings—whose county seat, born four or five years later, swaggered under the name of Paris, and in the middle and late nineteenth century became one of the richest and most aristocratic little cities in the state.

By 1810, Kentucky had 400,000 inhabitants, its population having almost trebled in two decades. The Indian menace was so far eliminated that my great-grandfather no longer carried a gun when he went to church, as he had done a quarter of a century before; but though Bourbon had 15,000 inhabitants, deer and an occasional bear still roved its rapidly shrinking tracts of forest, and in Lexington, not twenty miles from the Kennedy neighborhood, citizens still heard through their dreams the voice of the night watchman in the streets, "Past three o'clock and a cloudy, frosty morning," even as in New England, years before.

GRANDFATHER IS CALLED

In the county towns little academies and "elegant" female seminaries were springing up for those who could pay tuition fees, but poor folk and countryfolk had to acquire education by their own devices, if they got any at all, for there was as yet no state school system. The elders of a rural neighborhood, after talking it over for two or three years, would decide that something must be done about the children's ignorance, and they would look about for a school location and a teacher.

Sometimes the school functioned in a country church—though equally often it was the other way about; impecunious rural congregations often held their meetings in school buildings. As a usual thing, somebody in the neighborhood would donate a little scrap of ground for a site, and others would contribute timber and labor; and they would throw up a one-room log building with chinks stopped with thin flakes of stone bedded in clay, long shingles or roofing boards hand-riven from white oak and held in place by weight poles, and perhaps a couple of windows covered with heavy greased paper—for glass still had to be brought over the Alleghenies from the Atlantic seaboard and was therefore too costly a building material for rural communities.

The problem of teaching and maintenance was yet another matter. There being no public funds, the school must be run by subscription; that is, a certain sum per month, at best a dollar, though more often fifty cents or lower for each child, was paid by the parents as the teacher's perquisite. This meant that many a child could not attend for lack of means or could attend only a part of the term—which at best was not apt to last more than three months. It often meant that some of the children

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

in a family could go and not others. In such cases, families had varying ideas; some thought it better to send the bright ones to school, the ones most susceptible to learning, and let the dumb ones wallow in their ignorance. Others thought a leveling process better; try to uplift the thickheads a bit and let the bright ones rustle for themselves. Most families with many children and small means gave the youngsters turn and turn about; Bill and Sally could go to school this winter, but next winter they must take a layoff and let Lije and Miranda quaff of the well of knowledge.

As to teachers, they were just drawn from the laity. There were no examiners then, no specifications; if you believed that you could teach school or weren't strong enough for farming, you just got hold of a place, if you could, and went at it, as the old-timers used to say, by main strength and awkwardness. My grandfather was scarcely twenty years old when the elders of a rural community agreed that young Tom Kennedy was the very man to instruct their youth. Of course he had never been to college or even an academy. His only formal education had been a snatch or two at a rustic school such as I have described.

But a certain tradition of education had been brought with the family from Virginia; Thomas had a leaning toward knowledge, he learned to read and write at home and read what few books and newspapers he could lay hands on. He knew grammar; in public he spoke with what some of the neighbors considered real book English, he wrote a good, round hand, he could tell you things about history and geography and could cipher up to the rule-of-three (in the arithmetics of later generations,

it was called "Proportion") and beyond. Moreover, he continued to read and learn. What else could be desired of a teacher? In a rustic community where many still went about in deerskin moccasins, he seemed a highly precocious youth to folk just emerging from two or three generations in the forest.

He appeared to them to have other attributes of an educator, too, even at twenty. He had a good presence and poise; a fine head and face, with broad forehead and keen, steady, Irish-blue eyes—which would twinkle roguishly, too. He was stocky, muscular and firm of purpose; and these were highly desirable recommendations in rural school districts of those days, where some of the pupils were apt to be of adult stature and rowdy disposition. But withal, young Tom was a good mixer, a clever storyteller, and liked a joke, a dance with a pretty girl, or a coon hunt as well as the next one.

KENTUCKY BEGINNINGS

.....

SO IN the year 1820 Grandfather Thomas Kennedy faced his first school—and what a school it was! The roster of such an institution might almost be said to reach from the cradle to the grave; or, if you will insist upon strict accuracy, it ranged at least from the ages of five to twenty-five. The room had no floor save the earth. In the center a fire burned under a chimney built of split oaken sticks, laid in log fashion and covered with stiff yellow clay, the structure being supported three feet above the floor by four posts set in a square, six feet apart.

Surrounding this in a hollow square were backless benches, just the split halves of ten- or twelve-inch logs with the more or less flat side up, and supported on heavy billet legs. The upper side was adzed to smooth it and remove splinters, but the boys' breeches and the girls' dresses sometimes testified that the job hadn't been thoroughly done. On these the young scholars sat and conned their lessons a little above a whisper, swinging their legs in time as they chanted, "I-see-the-cat," or built the syllables of a word in that all-important study, spelling. Under each window a split log was set, flat side up and partly dressed, to serve as a writing desk. Not

many years passed before improvements came; school buildings with puncheon floors—that is, split slabs smoothed with an adze or ax—and a chimney and real fireplace at the end of the room.

There was not a great deal of writing done at these window desks because of a shortage of paper; and what there was, was done with goose-quill pens made and mended by the master himself, and with homemade and often rather anemic ink—pokeberry juice, oak galls and iron rust were ingredients, but a favorite variety was made with ooze from the inner bark of trees, especially the maple tree. Dilworth's Speller was about the earliest of all textbooks in the pioneer West, and sometimes the only one that could be found in a pioneer neighborhood.

All the old spelling books had simple reading lessons in them here and there and pupils often went through the book over and over again several times until many could pronounce and spell every word in it, even monstrosities like "phthisic" and polysyllabic wagon trains such as "unintelligibility." Spelling was considered of prime importance. Bad spelling was one of the surest marks of ignorance, in pioneer opinion. It had been so common among folk who had no opportunity for schooling and they were so ashamed of it that an emphasis upon the teaching of spelling was born, which persisted until new and revolutionary ideas invaded pedagogy in the twentieth century.

For advanced reading, the New Testament was used until something more practical could be afforded, which came about years later. Arithmetic was hardest of all to teach, for there were so few textbooks to be found in the country, so few slates, and no blackboards.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

One thing that set the Midwestern and Southern country school of the early nineteenth century apart from that of other ages was its rules of courtesy. Every pupil, whether boy or girl, upon entering the school, morning or noon, paused in the door to make a bow in the general direction of the teacher, though the courtesy was really directed at the Spirit of Education or perhaps the shade of Pestalozzi; for most teachers, Grandfather included, set the example by bowing, too, on the threshold. A boy would remove his hat, of course, before bowing, and then hang it on a peg in the wall beside the door. I am told that Negro children in rural Kentucky were still bowing as they entered the doors of their humble little schools sixty and seventy years later, though the whites had by that time abandoned the practice. In both Kentucky and Indiana—where Grandfather taught in after years—these urbanities were scrupulously insisted upon. In most schools, even if a pupil left the room during a session, he must not forget to bob his head as he reentered. If a visitor called during school hours, the whole student body arose and bowed.

Leaving the school in the evening was a matter of still greater punctilio. Upon being dismissed, the children would don their wraps (if any), gather their lunch baskets and pails, go outside and form in a line facing the door; the tallest (sometimes six feet) at one end, the altitude of the heads decreasing by careful gradation until the very smallest was reached at the other end.

Meanwhile the teacher—young Mr. Kennedy, let us say—would cover the fire with ashes, gather his belongings and appear, with all the dignity that his twenty years could support, in the door. At that, the entire line would

bow profoundly, the boys uncovering as they did so. Master in turn would doff his hat and with a graceful wave of the hand, dismiss them. They backed away a few steps, turned—and with yells of unleashed energy and emotion, suddenly became a running, happy, scuffling mob.

But relations in general between teacher and pupil were not so formal as these ceremonies would suggest. On the playground, Grandfather—like other young teachers—often joined in the boisterous boys' games of the period (some of the players indeed might be his contemporaries in age) and out of school hours he sometimes went on coon or possum hunts with his pupils, a fraternization by no means uncommon a century ago.

Schoolyard games reflected the ruggedness of frontier life, and some of them persisted long after the frontier had moved across the Rocky Mountains and into the sunset. Take Bull Pen, for example. Youth and even maturity has loved to play with a ball ever since the days of Imperial Rome, and perhaps before that. But throughout most of the nineteenth century, country boys in the rural South and West seldom had anything better than a ball of woolen yarn, usually a pair of old socks or a decadent stocking raveled out and wound by themselves, perhaps over a core of cotton twine, which gave it weight and greater hardness.

One of the oldest of backwoods games, Bull Pen, was played on a fifty-foot square, on the corners of which were four players who had possession of the ball. All the other players must stay inside the square; they couldn't cross the lines. The corner men tossed the ball from one to another, and as they did so, the crowd inside the square

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

surged away from its vicinity like frightened sheep; for the object of the corner man was to hit one of them with the ball. If a fellow who was the target could catch the ball, he took the baseman's place; so the object was to trap him out of position or at too short range to make a catch. He, in turn, either ducked, or if that was hopeless, tried to receive the wallop on one of the tougher areas of his body. The baseman's only reward for a hit was just the fun of socking somebody good and hard; but if he scored a clean miss, he lost his place and the man thrown at took his corner. It was a typically rough and vigorous pioneer sport.

Anty-over was another yarn ball game as old as the hills. With two groups of players, one on each side of the school building, one player with the ball in his hand would shout, "Anty!"

"Over!" came from the other side of the house, whereupon he heaved the ball over the roof. If it was caught as it came down by an opposing player, he rushed around the building and tried to hit one of the other team with it, picking off one of their best men, if possible, for if the fellow was hit, he had to change sides. Thus one side or the other might eventually be worn down to a single player. The suspense with which a group waited after the ball was thrown, not knowing from which direction attack would come, if at all, the joy of socking some fellow's back or stern with the ball, especially if the victim was the teacher, these things were the spice of the game.

In later years when ball games with bats began to be played, such as Town Ball and the various "Old Cats," the yarn ends had to be sewn down more securely to keep the ball from raveling away, and efforts began to be made

to find rubber for a core. In the seventies crude leather covers began to be sewn on the balls, in imitation of those bought in the stores. In Grandfather's youth, country boys didn't even have marbles to play with, because marbles cost money. No game was played that required much paraphernalia, or anything that couldn't be made by hand at home.

Grandfather was a *rara avis* in his day, for he did not believe in corporal punishment. I may say right here that his descendants did not go all the way with him in this doctrine. There were other and milder punishments commonly inflicted in his time and later for whispering, giggling and other misdemeanors not too appalling; standing before the school—on the rostrum if there was one—standing in a corner, perhaps with the face to the wall, and in aggravated cases of idleness or inattention, standing up with the tall, pointed dunce's cap on—Grandfather did not scorn these. But he never used a switch, strap or ferule. " 'Spare the rod and spoil the child' is a vicious doctrine," said he. "It should never have been uttered. Nothing is ever gained by violence, and I don't propose to use it except in self-defense."

He himself, when in school, had felt the agonizing whack of the long, flat ferule upon his tender palms, while the teacher with the other hand bent his fingers backward, arching the palm, making the blow more painful. He had been whipped with the cat-o'-nine-tails, a bunch of leather thongs on a wooden handle, and had seen the backs of boys' shirts stained with blood from the stripes. He had once been one of a group of pupils who rose in rebellion against such brutality and threw the whole neighborhood into an uproar.

No such medieval tortures, said he, should ever be seen in his schoolroom. Father and I agreed with him as to those, but we maintained that in extreme cases, a few touches with a switch now and then, if not too harshly applied, did no one any serious harm and were, for some characters, the only sort of corrective that made any impression or brought any decided improvement in conduct.

Grandfather's favorite weapon was what he called "moral suasion." In very annoying cases, he would call the boy or young man up before him, take each of his shoulders in a powerful grip, and looking straight into his face with those unwavering blue eyes which could upon occasion become blue steel lancets probing the other's soul, he would talk to him "like a Dutch uncle," exerting a will force under which some became as wax; occasionally posing the rest of the school as a jury, often extorting from the culprit a confession of sin or penitence. There was some headshaking over this delicacy of method among school patrons, many of whom firmly held to the dictum of Pete Jones in *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, "No lickin', no larnin'"; but it couldn't be denied that young Kennedy seemed to get results and preserve discipline fairly well.

It naturally followed that Grandfather was a Universalist in religion, refusing to accept the belief in eternal torment for sinners.

But there were occasional stubborn souls upon whom his suasion, at rare, untoward moments, failed to obtain the best results. There was Nancy, for example, a buxom young woman of eighteen, whose schooling for a long time bade fair to be almost a total loss. Nancy was some-

thing of a hellion. She considered herself a woman grown—as indeed she was in body—and therefore above the rules made for children. She talked and laughed, created disturbances, flirted with the big boys and was impudently certain that nothing could be done about it, Teacher's ideas as to punishment being what they were. It was unusual for a girl to be so unruly, and Mr. Kennedy was squarely up against it. He called her up and lectured her time and again, at which times it was her humor roguishly to pretend repentance, though it would shortly become evident that contrition was not in her. At last one day, after a particularly flagrant offense, Grandfather's Irish rose to the steaming point; but holding himself in leash, he said, sternly, "Nancy, your influence here is bad and the time has come for you to depart."

"I'd like to see myself," she put in, pertly.

"You must be removed from among us " Teacher went on.

"Removed where?" jeered Nancy. "You ain't got no place to remove me to."

"Oh, yes I have," he retorted, and taking her hand, he led her to a rear corner of the room. Nancy went quietly, grinning and curious. He then had a school building with a floor in it, about two feet above the ground. In that corner there was a broad, loose puncheon, easily lifted. Grandfather stooped and quickly threw it aside, then seized Nancy, pinning her arms to her sides. She had attempted to break away as soon as she detected his purpose, but in vain; he was too muscular an antagonist. She fought, kicked, screeched like a wildcat, but he had caught her off guard and pinned her limbs, and his strength was too great for her. Within half a minute, he

had crammed her down through the opening, replaced the puncheon and stood on it.

As he did so, and while her voice was momentarily hushed from lack of breath, a small boy sitting near by, remarked casually, as if communing to himself, "They's rattlesnakes under the school'ouse."

Nancy heard it and repented in tones which might have been heard a mile away; "Oh, let me o-out! I'll be good! I'll be good! Please, Teacher, lemme o-ou-ut! I'll never do nothin' again! . . . "

Grandfather acted promptly. He himself wasn't aware of any snakes under the building, but he took no chances. He quickly lifted the puncheon and helped the disheveled young cutup back into the room, a frightfully humiliated and thoroughly broken Nancy. She had met her master, and as a result, her reformation, at least in the school-room, was unmistakable. She never thereafter gave any serious trouble.

A rude, vulgar, even brutal incident? By modern standards, perhaps; but it was the frontier way, and something might be said in extenuation of that way, after all. The wilderness tended to breed some rough characters which could be impressed only by force. To them, compromise meant weakness; in their world, one either conquered or was conquered. It was a major function of the public school to grind down the rough edges of youth of that ilk on the emery wheel of discipline, to make orderly citizens of them, if possible.

To accomplish this, the teacher must have absolute power in his little realm, and the community heartily granted it. He was expected to be able to rule, by suasion if he chose, by rough-and-tumble force if necessary. That

this was the sentiment in rural America of the time is proven by the fact that Nancy's family made no complaint regarding this incident. It was just one of those things that happened in school life.

Like all unmarried rural teachers, Grandfather "boarded around" with his patrons, eating some weird cooking and having sleeping "accommodations" that would seem unconventional, not to say preposterous today, but which were commonplace to him; nights in a one-room cabin, with the whole family, old and young, male and female, on bed and floor around him; nights in the loft of more affluent homes, either on the floor or in a great, boxlike bed full of hay or dry leaves, wedged in among three or four squirming, kicking boys, almost as active asleep as awake, perhaps with moonlight creeping through the chinks and a screech owl quavering on the ridgepole above, or on another night, with fine snow blowing in under the ill-fitting roof and powdering his face.

He was active in all community functions and frolics—wood choppings, helping to husk a neighbor's corn crop, while the little brown jug went around, sometimes too often; bearing a hand at a house-raising—the building of a young couple's new home, of which, with the logs already cut and shingles split, a score of men would rear the walls and perhaps cap them with roof between sunrise and dark; footing it through a reel or quadrille to the fiddle strains of "Bonaparte's Retreat" or "The White Cockade" with pretty, supple Martha Bowles, just as blue-eyed as himself, just as tall and as purposeful as himself, whom he hoped to marry some day, if and when.

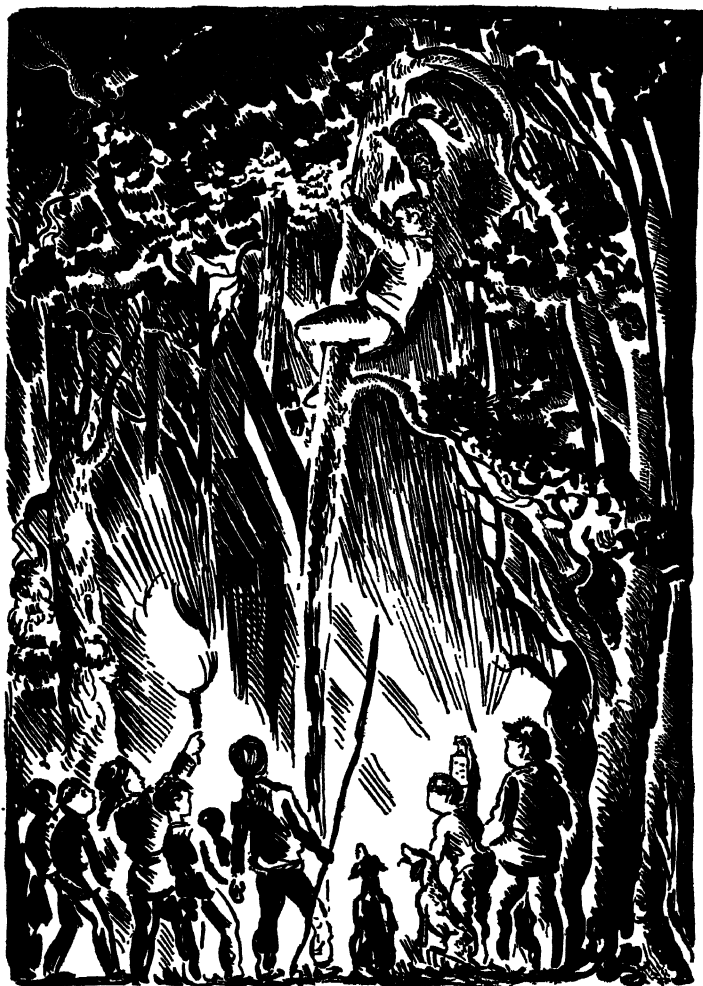
Then and for twenty years afterward, he went on a coon hunt now and then with his pupils. Such excursions

took place at night, with one of the party carrying an old colonial perforated tin lantern or a torch, perhaps made of the strips of dry bark pulled from a shellbark hickory trunk and tied in a bundle. The raccoon was hunted not only for the fun of the thing, but because of his practical value. His skin made caps for the men—sometimes for women and children, too—and was an article of trade; and his grease was considered a healing unguent for frostbite, sunburn, blisters, stings and chigger bites.

Grandfather didn't like coons; in fact, there were two of the animal kingdom of which he had a horror—the raccoon and the rattlesnake. One of his most vivid memories—I heard him tell the story more than once—was that of a coon hunt with his pupils in which he took a spectacular part. Starting out that evening, the dogs quickly picked up the scent and treed a coon. The usual routine was followed; one of the boys climbed the tree to shake the animal out, if possible, so that the dogs might have at him on the ground. Sometimes a pole was passed up to the climber, and he tried to poke the coon off the bough. The first one was caught so quickly that evening that they continued the hunt. Very shortly a big coon with the dogs at his very tail, was forced to scurry up a rather small tree. Now Grandfather stepped forward and said, "Boys, I always do my part in such enterprises as this. I'll climb the tree this time."

It was no easy assignment; the tree trunk was small and the tree had few large boughs. Grandfather climbed up several yards, until he could shake the whole treetop vigorously. The coon, on the main stem directly above him, clung fast, looking down at him calculatingly—and incidentally, a coon is no fool. Grandfather climbed two

KENTUCKY BEGINNINGS



or three feet higher, the tree swaying under his weight, and shook again. The coon, clutching the stem for dear life, saw that something drastic must be done. He climbed a yard or so directly down the trunk towards his antagonist, flipped lightly to the top of Grandfather's head, ran down over his shoulder and arm, dropped to a lateral bough, sped out that to its tip and leaped off into space; struck the ground with a thump, but was not too addled to dash to a larger tree near by, ahead of the dogs, and swarm up its trunk to safety.

Grandfather, momentarily petrified with astonishment and shock, climbed down to earth and said he was through for the night. "That coon deserves his life," said he. "I never saw anything so daring as that maneuver of his. When he dropped on my head, I could have sworn that he weighed twenty-five pounds. I was so startled that I couldn't have grabbed him, even if I'd had one hand free. I'll never climb after one of the beasts again. Let's go home," and they went.

Another time, years later, teacher, pupils and dogs treed a big male coon in an oak alongside a creek. From below he could not be discovered, even with torches, so Grandfather sent a boy up the tree to look for him. He was discovered on a bough overhanging a deep pool, and the boy shook it so vigorously that the quarry finally lost its grip and fell into the water. Now it happens that in an emergency, a coon can take care of itself in water about as well as on land; and as one of the boys quickly ran with a torch and crossed at a shallow place above the pool to head him off from the opposite bank, the old chap just trod water and waited for the next move.

Everybody was yelling orders and advice, the dogs

were bouncing to and fro and barking, and Grandfather, who was poking at the coon with a long pole, lost his balance and fell, kerslosh! headfirst into the creek. When he righted himself, the coon was only a few feet away, swimming around him, watching him with glittering eyes. One of the boys, who had a rifle, finally got a good sight on the animal by the glare and shot him dead.

Grandfather swam ashore and crawled out, streaming water and feeling rather ridiculous. As he was trying to think of something to say, one of the boys, who was apparently suffering from some strange internal convulsion, said, "Teacher, may we laugh now?"

"Why not?" asked Grandfather, struck by the quaint humor of the situation. "The joke is all on me." With that, their pent-up amusement burst forth in howls of laughter, making the woods echo with it. They stamped about, slapping their knees, rolling on the ground, while Grandfather laughed with them.

There were daily reminders—for anyone whose ear was tuned to catch the faint, receding pipes of Pan—of how recently this had been a wilderness, of how wistfully the forest and its denizens still clung to the bits of land that were left to them. A school at which Grandfather taught had been recently built upon the site of a deer lick—a spot where the earth was impregnated with a saline ooze, so that the wild things came to lick it and thus obtain seasoning for their diet. The deer left in the woods near by knew of no other salt dispensary, and they would come now and then, even during school hours, usually a buck and a doe together, looking about them with soft, fearful eyes and starting at every sudden sound, to lick the earth in the corners by the big chimney.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Certain sporting neighbors who heard of it wanted to lie in wait for them and kill a mess of venison, but Grandfather sternly forbade any such thing about the school premises. The deer so disrupted the children's study by their visits, however, that Grandfather at length reluctantly had a palisade of stakes driven so that they could not reach the chimney corners; and after several attempts, they gave it up and were seen about the school no more.

One still, mellow day in autumn, with a blue haze in the air and the deep red gum leaves slowly whispering down from twig to earth, a recitation was in progress, when through the open door and windows the baying of hounds in full cry was heard afar off—sweet music to the old-time rustic ear. Nearer and nearer the sound came, muffled now and then as the dogs dipped through a hollow; now they were evidently in the timber just across the road.

Suddenly a red fox, hard pressed, shot across the clearing, bolted through the front door of the school building, under benches, right down the middle of the room. While teacher and pupils stood frozen with astonishment, it dashed to the cold fireplace, glanced up the chimney, abandoned that idea, whirled and ran to a window, leaped up over a writing desk, through the window and vanished.

Meanwhile the dogs, galloping, yelping, with wildly flapping ears, had reached the first door and halted in complete bafflement. They knew that storming in force through a room full of humans just wasn't done; they had felt the toes of cowhide boots against their ribs and rumps too often to forget that. While they milled about frenziedly, one of them in desperation ran around the build-

KENTUCKY BEGINNINGS

ing, picked up the scent of the fox under the window, gave tongue and was off; in a moment the rest of the pack followed him, and their voices receded into the forest.

The schoolroom relaxed and a ripple of amusement ran through it, rather at its own tension than at the woodland drama just enacted. The teacher's dutiful finger sought his place on the spelling-book page.

"Now, let us go on," said he. "I believe Henry was next. Ibex."

"I, eye, b-e-c-k-s, becks, ibecks," spelled Henry.

THE GREAT MIGRATION

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NOT until 1825—rather late in life, it seemed—did Thomas Kennedy feel himself financially able to marry Martha and set up a home of his own; and even then it was a strain. It was high time they married, for Martha had reached the ripe age of twenty-four and, by standards of the time, was already an old maid.

A rural young couple of a century ago—yes, and even long afterward in those parts—must be accomplished far beyond anything that is expected of young people today. Grandfather must know not only agriculture and animal husbandry, but must know how to fell a tree and reduce it to firewood, how to make fence rails and build fences, to build a log house and chimney—manufacturing all shingles, hinges, latches, etc., himself—to butcher and smoke meat, make and repair his harness and the family shoes, fashion tool handles, repair wagons, shear sheep, turn apples into vinegar, leach lye out of ashes and rot hemp for rope fiber, not to mention a bit of cooperage and blacksmithing.

Grandmother must know how to cook—and a corking good cook she was, as I can testify—rear babies, card wool and seed cotton, spin both yarn and thread, color them

THE GREAT MIGRATION

with dyes made by herself, weave cloth and rag carpet (they even made some fabric out of nettle fiber), make soap and candles, make her own, her husband's and children's clothing, can, preserve and dry fruits and vegetables, rear chickens and, in her spare (!) time, do an occasional chore in the garden. Martha was strong, supple and energetic, and she measured up well to her new responsibilities.

There was one question upon which she and Grandfather never agreed. She believed that morality and good behavior must, in early youth, to some extent be inculcated upward through the epidermis of the hinder parts with the flat of the hand, a shingle or switch; and she carried out her idea in rearing her five children, all of whom loved her devotedly. I do not know what arguments she and Grandfather may have had over the matter at the beginning, but Father testified that Grandfather did not interfere with her occasional spankings and she, in turn, made it convenient not to shock his sensibilities too frequently by inflicting them in his presence. When I came along, she applied the system to me with excellent results, for I mastered a point of ethics at almost every one of the rare paddlings she gave me.

Grandfather, of course, had to toil at his farming more intensively than ever between school terms now. He was becoming a person of influence in the community. Though antislavery, he was a Jacksonian Democrat of the deepest dye.

"Jackson was one of our greatest patriots," he used to say in later years. "He was right as to the Bank and Nullification, but he had some defects of character; he was too intolerant, too blustery, he liked to fight too well."

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

He met Old Hickory two or three times when the great man was passing to and fro between Nashville and Washington—which was usually done in those days by wagon road up through Lexington and Paris to Maysville on the Ohio River, thence by steamboat to Wheeling, and over the new Cumberland Road to the capital. When the old soldier came through in 1829 on his way to Washington to be inaugurated as President, he was wined and dined in Paris, and young Professor Kennedy was there to shake his hand along with the rest.

But there were those in the county who had it in for the general because, when in Congress, he had voted against a bill for a government road from Lexington to Maysville; and these bitter ones switched the signboards at a fork of the road east of Paris, so that the finger board marked "To Maysville" pointed down the road to Mount Sterling. Leaving Paris, the general and his entourage had gone many miles in that direction before they discovered their error, and they came near missing the boat at Maysville. There is little doubt that the general momentarily forgot his promise to his wife never to swear again.

As the thirties advanced and his little family increased, Grandfather became restless. Kentucky was passing through economic fluctuations in those years of which the present generation knows nothing. For an undeveloped state, it was top-heavy with population. The Bluegrass region had seemed to be booming, and Lexington, which had become a manufacturing as well as commercial center, was spoken of by an Eastern editor in 1816 as "the Metropolis of the West." But the coming of the steamboat to the Ohio River rapidly changed all that. The Ohio

THE GREAT MIGRATION

became the great highway of commerce, Louisville and Cincinnati leaped ahead of Lexington in size, and interior Kentucky languished.

People began emigrating northward and westward into the newer, rawer states of the Northwest Territory, and beyond. That movement, especially of the first half of the nineteenth century, accounts for the fact that two governors of Ohio, three of Indiana, seven of Illinois, ten of Missouri, five of Montana and scattering ones of other states were born in Kentucky. Ed Hannigan, a pale youth who was clerk in a store in Paris in my grandfather's boyhood, became a leading figure in Indiana politics and the most compelling orator in the state, and by 1843 was United States Senator Hannigan—no less.

Prices of all farm products declined in Bourbon County; even the population grew smaller. Grandfather had not prospered as he had hoped, and he had the inevitable early American feeling that his luck was bound to be better in a "new country." In the state of Indiana, to northward, there were still large tracts of government land awaiting the settler. The state had begun building a great canal along the Wabash River, to be the longest in America; it planned other canals, turnpikes, a railroad. Its vision was limitless.

"Everything's laid out accordin' to a plan," declared an immigrant who had returned to Kentucky for a visit. "They named the capital Indynoplis so'st they wouldn't be any doubt what state it was the capital of. They picked a place right spang in the center of the state, and laid the town out in a mile square with a circle in the center and four avenoos runnin' cattycornered from the circle out to the corners of the square. And in that circle's an elegant

little park, and the governor's mansion allus goin' to be there."

"Sounds kinder monarchial to me," criticized a Bourbon conservative. But to Grandfather and others it sounded like a state that was bound to be great and prosperous. And with thousands of acres of the richest land on the continent to be bought from the government there at \$1.25 an acre. . . . There were other considerations, too. Thomas was opposed to slavery—and across the Ohio there was no slavery. And finally, and one of the most potent reasons of all, there was the matter of corn liquor.

The first still in Bourbon County, so far as we know now, was set up in a little log building in 1790. Within twenty years there were a dozen stillhouses in the county, making the corn liquor which eventually came to be known as Bourbon. Drinking then, as it had been through most of the eighteenth century, was America's greatest curse—rum in New England, whisky and brandy everywhere else. President Jefferson said it had done the public's business more damage than any other agency within his knowledge. Even preachers were boozers, and were sometimes more or less drunk at weddings and funerals. The temperance movement had begun and had thousands of adherents, but so far it had made little headway in the South.

Grandfather had not escaped the prevalent habit. The man who didn't drink in Bourbon County then was regarded as highly eccentric. Tom Kennedy was not a drunkard, nor did he go on periodical toots and fall into the ditch or beat up his family. But he knew that he was getting mildly jingled too often for his own or anybody's

good. It was a common thing then for a teacher to breathe alcohol into a child's face when bending over to help it with a lesson; and for a teacher to face his pupils unsteady on his pins was not unheard of. Grandfather had a deeply ingrained moral sense which made this seem a horrible thing, one of which he did not want to be guilty. Moreover, he had young children coming on, whom he wanted to protect from the curse. It was reported that Indiana had not gone into distilling to any extent, and he thought that if he broke away from his boon companions and took up a tract of land in a thinly settled portion of the state, he would be able to avoid temptation thereafter.

It was a severe wrench to old ties for the couple to leave Kentucky, not only to bid farewell to friends and kin and childhood scenes with a sense of finality which is unknown today, but to give up the school life which Grandfather had known and enjoyed for sixteen years—though he thought it possible that he might teach again in Indiana. In those sixteen years, the country schools in Kentucky had not improved greatly. They had attained the dignity of floors and sometimes a real table for the teacher; there were a few grammars and arithmetics in circulation now, even an occasional history or geography book; but in most places the children still sat on rough, backless benches, the terms were still no more than three or four months, and there were still no teachers' examinations.

Between 1830 and 1840 Bourbon County's population declined by 4,000: and six of those who left it during that decade were Thomas and Martha Kennedy and their four children, a daughter and three sons, of whom the youngest, Benjamin Franklin, born in 1832, was destined

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

to be my father. (There was another son born after they reached Indiana.) In the summer of 1836 they disposed of their farm, packed the most necessary belongings in a big covered wagon, and set out behind a team of oxen for the promised land.

They took no cow or hogs with them, because of the trouble of driving and caring for them en route. Furthermore, it was reported on seemingly good authority that Kentucky hogs taken North, when turned loose in the woods, promptly went back to their old homes, sturdily swimming the Ohio River and any other stream that came in their way. As for the cow, Grandfather hoped to buy one cheap in Indiana, and if prices were too high—well, many a pioneer family did without milk and butter for months, sometimes years.

Just how many weeks it took them to cover the 250 miles to their destination, the tract of public land which Grandfather had chosen in Putnam County, Indiana, I've forgotten, but anyone who has seen oxen walk will agree with me that a good, athletic snail could almost have kept pace with them all the way. Grandfather, of course, walked practically the whole distance, his wife nearly as far, and even some of the children, down to the four-year-old son, covered stretches on foot. No small part of Grandmother's time and attention must have been necessary to keep Benjamin F., probably the most dynamic, mischievous little imp ever born of woman, from getting run over or drowned or lost en route.

They worked northwestward to the Ohio River and ferried it at Madison, then Indiana's chief port of entry from the river. Only a few miles upstream, at Vevay, was born several months later, Edward Eggleston, who lived

THE GREAT MIGRATION

to write *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, a folk picture such as Grandfather and Grandmother themselves lived and acted through nearly half a century.

Up the hill above Madison, men with picks and shovels, ox teams and wagons were puttering with a gash in the earth which they said was to house a railroad running from Madison to Indianapolis and eventually to Lafayette (it reached Indianapolis eleven years later). Northward the sad-eyed, drooling oxen toiled over roads heavy with stones and dust and mud, through pindling little county capitals—Vernon, Columbus, Franklin; past a few old farms of ten, twenty, thirty years' tenure, but many more recently just emerged from the woods, and some just being cleared. Mixed with the settlers who had come from Pennsylvania and the Northeast they found many from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, the Carolinas. Governor Noah Noble, who sat in the State House at that moment, was a native of Virginia.

At Franklin, two years before, the Indiana Baptist Manual Labor Institute had been founded, and as the Kennedys passed through, it had just completed its first own building, a one-room frame structure costing \$350, with a bell in the fork of a near-by tree. That little school presently became Franklin College, and fifty years later, when classicism still dominated all collegiate utterance, a picture of that first building was appearing in the college literature with the caption, "Ædificium Primum. Æt. 1836." They must be classical or bust!

I dwell upon Franklin because its county was in after years our family home, and has been all my life, and because I myself once sat for a season in the halls of its college.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Twenty miles further on, the Kennedy family viewed the formal plan and informal raggedness of the state capital, then a muddy, shabby little town, much inferior to Lexington, but with a capitol building in classic style which was called the finest in the West, and even had its picture in Olney's Geography. From there they turned westward—a little north of west—into the forests of Putnam County, and finally rested their toilworn feet on the rich blackness of their own quarter-section of land, lying near Big Walnut Creek, the principal fork of Eel River. Here Grandfather felled trees and built a double log house—that is, two pens of logs, two rooms with an open passage between, but all under one roof, Southern style—and the new life began.

HOMESTEADING IN INDIANA

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THE Kennedys were now in a country even rawer than rural Bourbon County, but with many things to remind them of home. They settled near a hamlet called Bainbridge—tiny then and tiny yet—where, ten years before, a hardy traveler had stopped to look about him and said, "This region will never be settled. Its extent is almost incomprehensible—an unbounded wilderness, never to be reclaimed and improved." But now, axes were biting into the forest around the settlers' cabins, and less than ten miles away, the village of Greencastle had a population of nearly five hundred.

Grandfather's land touched Big Walnut Creek, and half a dozen of the pupils in his first school lived on the other side of the stream. There was neither boat nor bridge nor foot-log. As much of the school's three months' course lay in the dry autumn and early winter when the creek was low, the children could wade it at a riffle—they might come barefoot until December—or pick a way across it, foot-dry, on the rocks. If it was swollen, they just stayed at home. But if rain brought the creek up while they were at school, Grandfather went to the ford and carried the two or three youngest children

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

across, though he might have to wade, up to his knees, up to his waist, or perhaps even swim a bit, with the youngster clinging to his neck. I have heard him say that he had crossed Big Walnut as many as six times near dusk of a winter afternoon.

As soon as a log dwelling house and stable could be thrown up, he set about clearing ground for a garden and small cornfield, meanwhile canvassing for a school. The panic of 1837 came on before he had time to turn around, and made getting a foothold harder, though backwoods-men living close to nature's breast didn't notice it quite so much as folk in the cities. Grandfather found that the earnings of a teacher varied widely according to the relative poverty of a neighborhood and its opinion of the value of learning—though the general run of neighborhoods in Putnam County averaged up pretty evenly in the last-named respect, all being melting pots of immigrants from the Atlantic seaboard, Pennsylvania, and the upper South, with a seasoning of second- and third-generation descendants of early pioneers in that region.

The fee which a teacher might collect for a three months' school term ran all the way from 50 cents to \$1.75 per pupil if the teacher boarded around with the patrons—and naturally, most patrons preferred to pay a part of their stint, if possible, in board—which meant venison or sowbelly, wild greens and johnny-cake, with wild honey for sweetenin', and a night's rest perhaps on the floor or in a loft with several members of the family. If a teacher rounded up as many as twenty pupils, he might amass a cool \$20, \$35 or \$50 in the course of a three months' term, provided everybody paid up, as they usually did.

Under a state law of 1833, his pay in cash or kind for the three months which was considered the normal rural school year must not exceed \$60—these educational monopolists must be curbed somehow!—and it couldn't be collected until he had finished the term; for there had been certain graceless fellows who had collected some of their pay in advance or intermediately and then skipped out, leaving the school forlorn.

About ninety-five per cent of the pay came usually in commodities or labor. What with times as hard as they were, cash was scarcer than ever, and, moreover, somebody tried every now and then to work off on you some of the red, white or blue scrip—known contemptuously as Red Dog, White Dog and Blue Dog—with which the state was trying to raise the wind to build canals and other more or less ornamental whimsies.

At the end of the term Grandfather, like other teachers, had to take a wagon to the school to haul away his pay—fresh or cured meat, corn, oats, potatoes, homespun yarn, home-woven rag carpet, maybe some pieces of fur. A blacksmith would pay in horseshoeing and tire setting, another man in hauling, others in general labor. Often, Thomas Kennedy's big boy pupils worked for him at clearing, plowing, hoeing, woodchopping or fence building to pay the tuition of themselves and their younger brothers and sisters; and as some of them were in their twenties and could swing an ax or steer a plow with anybody, they were what was called "full hands."

But teaching school three months in the year and trying to clear and farm land meanwhile and betweentimes meant rather slow progress. In his second season on Indiana soil, Grandfather made a deal with the tannery

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

which was the chief industry of Greencastle, a deal which sounds appalling to modern ears. He sold them a hundred white oak trees, averaging three feet in diameter and a possible two thousand board feet of lumber each, for ten cents a tree; and the only part of them that was used was the bark! The agreement was that the buyers were to fell the trees, and to do it in such a manner as to damage as much standing timber around them as possible. Then, when the tanbark had been removed and the fallen timber had seasoned a bit, the tangle was fired and became a roaring furnace, thus doing most of the work of clearing the land for cultivation. It was a devastating method, but the pioneer must have quick action. My father earned his first money by carrying and piling bark for that tannery.

Grandfather shopped around from year to year for the best school job he could find, which wasn't always in the immediate vicinity of his home; and that often meant a walk or ride of several miles, morning and evening. If he didn't come home on a stormy night, Grandmother didn't worry; she knew he had taken to shelter somewhere. Occasionally he did a bit of boarding around, and had the usual pioneer sleeping experiences.

Hospitality was still free in the rural Middle West, and in fact, was gladly, even eagerly offered; not only because of the spirit of neighborliness characteristic of a pioneer society, but because the traveler who could tell the settler something of the outside world or even of another neighborhood was a welcome guest. Families whose homes were two or three hundred yards off the highway sometimes sent children out to the road to waylay passers-by and invite them in to stay the night or at least to eat a

meal to break the daily loneliness, to give news which intrinsically might mean little or nothing to the family, but which at least was something different.

When a couple or two of guests and a teacher who was boarding out his salary gathered in a one-room house on the same night, one where there was perhaps a family of six or eight, all the plane surfaces in the house were literally covered, in the dead vast and middle of the night, with recumbent human frames. There might be just one bed in such a place and that a stationary one, made by setting a post in the floor at the proper distance from a corner of the room, connecting it with the walls by a side and a footrail—just rough poles—weaving a web of rope or leather thongs between those rails and the walls, and dumping thereon a mattress or “tick” filled with hay, straw or dry leaves. Sometimes there was a feather bed to put atop of this, sometimes not. Those not fortunate enough to draw a place in the bed lay on the floor, and if there was a loft to the cabin—as usually there was—some could be stowed there.

When there were guests, the men always stepped outside, even though it might be raining or snowing, until the women could undress. When summoned back into the house, the candles would be out and the women abed; and if a flickering fire on the hearth still gave a little light, the women would cover their heads with the quilts while the men undressed. If there was a revival or a Baptist association meeting in the vicinity, the sleepers lay in windrows—often four adults to a bed and all the floor would hold, with perhaps some of the men in the stable loft and the shuckpen if the weather was not too cold.

On cold nights in the house at times of such crowding,

everybody had to sleep on his side, face to back, each fitting into the other, spoon-fashion, in order to get as many as possible into the beds and under the quilts on the floor. It is alleged that when some sleeper awoke in the night, tired of lying on one side, he would call out, "Spoon!" and everybody turned over, fitting themselves into each other's curves again, the outer ones clutching the edges of the quilt in a desperate effort to keep it from being pulled off them.

Men and women actually lay together on the floor at such times, but in the most decorous way. There were rules. No woman ever slept next to a man who was not her husband. Suppose there were married couples, young men and young women who had to sleep in one batch on the floor; the ladies went to bed first with the single ones in the middle, it being understood on which side each married woman would lie. Then when the husbands came in, they disposed themselves, each next his own wife, while the unmarried chaps slept on the outer edges.

If there were three or four married couples, the women bedded themselves in agreed fashion, with, say, Mrs. A and Mrs. D. on the outside, Mrs. B. and Mrs. C. in between them. When the men retired, Messrs. A. and D. placed themselves, each next his own wife, with B. and C. on the outer rim, separated, for that night at least, from their spouses. There was no cheating, no such scenes as Smollett loved to picture in English inns of the eighteenth century. No country girl who went astray could trace the beginning of her downfall to such a night as this.

A favorite story of those days and long afterward was that of a preacher and his wife traveling through the backwoods, who were overtaken by nightfall near a one-

room cabin whose tenants were strangers to them, but who received them hospitably and asked them to stay for the night. The housewife, as always, eagerly set about doing her best for the guests. Chickens were killed and every pot, skillet and pan set to work in the fireplace, for there were few cooking stoves in rural Indiana even as late as 1840. After supper, guests and entertainers sat about the fire and talked about the Bible, the crops and thrilling, faraway places which the strangers had recently visited, perhaps even such metropoli as Indianapolis and Fort Wayne.

One by one the six or seven children toppled over, drunk with sleep, and were put to bed on pallets on the floor. At last the hostess suggested that perhaps the guests might like to retire. She indicated the only bed in the room as their sleeping place, and she and her husband stepped out into the cold while the clergyman and his wife hastily disrobed and got into bed.

"I'm afraid we're putting you folks to a right smart inconvenience," said the minister, when the others came in. "I hate to make you sleep on the floor."

"Oh, don't you worry about that, Parson," exclaimed the host, heartily. "We're used to it. Matter of fact, we've slept on the ground out o' doors more'n once."

The visitors, tired with their long day's ride, fell asleep within five minutes. Some hours later, the preacher's wife awoke with the vague impression that the bed was harder and rougher than she had thought it was. She turned over and her hand struck palpable wood. She felt it in amazement—rough puncheon surface—then lifted her head and looked about her. By the faint glow from the last dying coals in the fire she saw that she and her husband

were lying, not in the bed, but on a quilt on the floor, while their host and hostess appeared to be occupying the bed.

Quietly she lay down again, drew the covers about her neck and fell asleep, but with the resolve to awaken as early as possible and see what the next move would be. As the story goes, the man and woman of the house arose before dawn, hastily and silently dressed, smoothed the bed a bit, lifted the supposedly sleeping guests—one of whom had much ado to keep up the pretense of unconsciousness—back into bed and covered them up, then set about reviving the fire and doing the morning chores. In a quarter of an hour or so the preacher's wife pretended to awaken.

It's a tall story, but they used to laugh over it eighty years ago—it was such a funny caricature of the real hospitality that was offered even in the humblest shack. By the same token, tall stories about stingy people—the man who stopped his clock at bedtime, for example, to save wear and tear on the works, and started it when he arose again in the morning—were favorite jokes, for though the pioneers must from necessity be economical, few of them were really parsimonious. Anything they had could be borrowed, from a wagon and team down to a jackknife; but you must be equally willing to loan in return. The fellow who wouldn't loan, or wouldn't help his neighbors at log-rollings and house-raising received no help himself from anybody—unless some dire emergency beset him or his family; then all his shortcomings were forgotten, and his neighbors rushed wholeheartedly to the rescue.

And speaking of the stingy man's clock, most house-

holds had one on the mantel—with all-wooden works in those days—though very frequently they had no cooking stove; for the Yankee clock peddler had left no stone unturned. A traveler in Indiana in the forties remarked that “in a cabin where there is not a chair to sit on, there is sure to be a Connecticut clock”; and on those thrilling evenings when there was learned company in the house, its inexorable hands seemed to the family to whirl with abnormal speed around to ten, eleven, sometimes to midnight, as the preacher or teacher or both sat discussing and discoursing to and with an enthralled audience of religion and politics and life and the world beyond the forests—the merits and demerits of Jackson, Clay and Webster; did each wear horns or a halo?—Indiana’s public-works program; millennium or cataclysm?—this new invention they called the telegraph, the temperance movement, infant baptism or damnation, total depravity, close communion, the possibility of mortals attaining holiness. Grandfather was frequently under fire for his eccentricity of Universalism, but sustained the attacks stoutly. “All life, both before and after what we call death, is a progression towards ultimate perfection,” he would maintain.

“But you can’t deny the existence of hell, Brother Kennedy,” the preacher would protest. “How do you get around the parable of the rich man, for example, in Luke, sixteen?”

“The rich man was simply being purged of his sin,” Grandfather would reply. “He would reach heaven eventually, as everybody will, though they may have to suffer for a season. Doesn’t David say in Psalm sixteen, ‘Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell?’ ” Of course the

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

minister would have a comeback for that, and on they would go, ding-dong, hammer and tongs.

"How do you get around Revelation?" was another would-be poser.

"Why, Revelation proves my belief better than anything," Grandfather would reply, triumphantly. "In Chapter twenty and verse ten, it tells us that it's the devil himself who 'will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone and be tormented day and night, forever and ever.'"

He knew his Bible as he knew the back of his hand, and like the others, he knew what to quote and what to dodge, if he was allowed.

"And in Chapter twelve," he would go on, "it plainly says that Satan's rule on earth is going to be short. 'The devil is come down unto you,' it says, 'having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.' And finally, I rely on the prophets and the apostles when they say that 'the Lord our God is merciful,' and that 'God is love.' Such a God would not send his children to hell forever."

The family would listen enthralled while the great scholars hurled Scripture back and forth at each other's heads. An occasional master of the house might be a Bible reader or rather fancy himself as a doctrinaire, and he would put in his oar. The arguments were apt to be spirited, but not often acrimonious, and frequently wound up in banter and a laugh; for the pioneers were, on the whole, really more tolerant than they have been given credit for being.

HORNET REFORMERS

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BETWEEN school terms—and remember that “between” meant nine months in the year—Grandfather toiled at extending his cleared land and his farming operations, and in the course of two or three years he had quite a bit of produce to sell.

The best market for farmers in his neighborhood was Crawfordsville, some twenty miles northward; though sometimes, when conditions seemed to justify it, they pushed on thirty miles farther to Lafayette, which in winter and spring was the head of navigation for the pocket steamboats on the Wabash River, as well as a port on the Wabash and Erie Canal, with connections for Toledo and the East. What with heavy roads and getting bogged down now and then, such a journey meant being away from home several days, especially if one were driving a few cattle or hogs, which made the job slower than ever.

It became the practice of a group of neighbors to go on these marketing trips together, sometimes half a dozen wagons in a train, for mutual aid and economy, rather than protection. Driving cattle or hogs along an unfenced road often called for more than one herder, and every

day the exertions of several would be required to pry at least one wagon, if not more, out of a mudhole, of which the road was just a series from late autumn to early summer. The adventurers would pool their provisions, camp and cook together over one fire at night. After their venison and corncake and a round of gossip and story-telling, they would wrap the draperies of their couches about them—that is, roll up in their blankets or, more likely, homemade quilts—and sleep either on the ground or—particularly if it was raining—in their covered wagons.

Whisky was always taken on such journeys by one or more of the party, to guard against colds, fatigue, malaria, pneumonia, snakebite and any other ailment or menace, known or unknown. When nice, fresh whisky could be bought for twelve and a half cents a gallon, it was foolhardy to travel without such a panacea and preventive at one's elbow.

Grandfather hadn't quite escaped from the clutches of the stuff since leaving Bourbon County. For the most part he kept away from it, but now and then his foot slipped a little. It did just that on one memorable autumn day when he reached home after a damp and fatiguing journey to and from Lafayette. He had had just enough drinks on the last day to implant in his soul a high and unshakable purpose—one of those curious, absorbing alcoholic quirks which take possession of the mind, and to which it clings with prideful stubbornness.

A colony of hornets had built a big nest in the loft of his home, right up against the gable of the roof, passing in and out on their daily affairs through crevices under the shingles. Grandfather now saw as clearly as in a crystal

that he had been negligent all summer in not eliminating that nest. It was unfinished business, something that must be attended to at once. He reached home an hour or two after nightfall, which meant that the family had eaten supper and gone to bed.

Thomas, the oldest son, was away from home; he had begun an apprenticeship in Greencastle. His sister was at some house in the neighborhood, and Grandmother was at home with the two younger boys. (The youngest, Henry Clay, was not yet born.)

Grandfather unharnessed, stabled and fed his horses and came to the house seething with his great resolve.

"Is that you, Thomas?" called his wife as he stamped in.

"Yes, Patsy."

"I allowed you'd be in this evening," said she. "I left some supper for you on the table."

"I haven't time to eat now," said he. Lighting a spill at a coal which still glowed faintly among the ashes on the hearth—for the evening was coolish—he touched it to a candle.

"Haven't time?" she repeated, sleepily.

"No, I'll neither eat nor sleep till I finish a job that I've had on my mind all summer."

"What in time do you mean?" she wondered.

"I'm going to take down that hornet's nest in the loft," said he, pointing impressively upward.

"My conscience, Thomas, what can you be thinking about?" she protested, though she had begun to see what was wrong. "They never bother us; it's late in the season now, and when it gets cold, you can—"

"I tell you, I'm going to take it down tonight. It's been

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

there months too long already. I want the boys to help me. Robert! Benjamin!"

"You'll get stung," she argued. "Wait till morning, anyhow."

"I'll have you know," he declared, eyeing her with tipsy gravity, "that I built this house for my family, and not for a passel of hornets. Robert! Benjamin!" he roared. "Get up! I want you."

They finally had to be dragged out of bed and stood on their feet, for a boy's sleep, and especially that of an active country boy, is like that of the dead. About three-quarters awake, they whined and begged for postponement, but in vain. "Up with you!" said Grandfather, motioning toward the ladder on the wall. "I want Ben to hold the candle and Robert the meal sack while I put the nest in."

In bare feet and breezy costume the youngsters climbed the ladder, which was just a series of heavy oaken pins driven at right angles into auger holes bored in the logs of the wall; in short, it was like a ladder with the upright piece along one side omitted. Grandmother, seeing that trouble was brewing, arose, threw on a dress and her shoes and lighted another candle. Grandfather, with the meal sack over his shoulder and one finger hooked through the ring on the candlestick, followed the boys up the ladder, the pegs creaking under the weight of his powerful, two-hundred-pound body. Reaching the loose, rattling board floor of the loft, he handed the candlestick to Ben and the sack to Robert.

"I wisht that was a coon instead of a hornet's nest," mused Robert, uneasily.

"Be silent!" commanded Grandfather. "Now, stand

right here with the sack," and he advanced upon the nest. Had he been perfectly sober, he would have known better, but he was pot-valiant and bent upon proving the inflexibility of his purpose. He wrenched the marvelously constructed paper castle, larger than a football, away from the rafters and turned to put it into the bag.

The hornets, like their human neighbors, had been sound asleep up to that moment, but the earthquake which seemed to have seized upon their world began to stir them awake, and the first two or three came crawling sluggishly forth to learn, if possible, what it was all about. Grandfather saw that there was need for haste. The nest was nearly as large as the mouth of the bag which Robert was nervously and inadequately holding; more hornets were pouring forth; Grandfather, nervous too, from excitement and haste as well as alcohol, bungled his thrust as one stung him on the hand, and the nest fell to the floor. By that time the hornets were swarming out, and the boys frankly turned tail and ran toward the ladder, Ben dropping the candle, wick down, which snuffed it out.

Their father, recoiling in the darkness, stepped on the ends of two planks which didn't quite reach the rafter behind him; they sank under his weight, and down he went through the opening—their other ends flying up in the air, they slid with him, and man, hornet's nest and boards came thundering down across bed and chairs on the floor below, while Grandmother shrieked and ran for her life, and the boys scuttled down the ladder. The hornets weren't used to operating by candlelight, but they did the best they could, and the Kennedy family, thoroughly disorganized, everybody for himself and the

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY



devil take the laggard, fled through front and back doors into the open.

Grandmother and the boys rallied in the yard and passed the rest of the night in the smokehouse; but Grandfather had vanished. Where he spent that night, nobody knows to this moment, for to the day of his death, he never told anyone, nor even spoke of that evening's disaster. At dawn the rest of the family cautiously reconnoitered, finally started a smudge and managed to poke the flattened remains of the nest—the supposition was that Grandfather had landed on it as a cushion when he came down—out into the yard.

As soon as it seemed safe, they ventured into the house, and Grandmother set about preparing breakfast. The boys wondered audibly where Pa was, but Grandmother rather guessed that he'd show up eventually. They were eating breakfast when he appeared silently in the doorway. One of his eyes was swollen almost shut, and one hand showed some marks of the disaster, which were all the damages visible; though what contusions and hurts he might have had on his body, no one knew, for he didn't mention them.

"Sit down, Thomas," said Grandmother. "We are going right ahead with our breakfast. We didn't know when you'd come. You must be good and hungry, with no supper last night."

That pinprick didn't win any visible reaction from him. He sat down, and a few wary remarks anent the happenings on his trip and what had taken place at home while he was gone were all that punctured the rather strained silence. Finally Grandmother drank the last sip of her mostly chicory coffee, set the cup down with a

determined click, and leaning back in her chair, said, "Thomas, it seems to me that every noble impulse of your nature is dead."

That heavy-artillery attack brought from him the merest shadow of a wry grin. "Oh, I hope it isn't as bad as that, Patsy," he said.

"Well, it's pretty bad. Your friends and family have respected you, believed in you and trusted you"—she had plainly conned this speech beforehand—"but that disgraceful affair last night—well, it just sort of casts a shadow over everything." She paused for a second, while Grandfather said nothing. For once in his life, he was a beaten man; he was not the head of the household. Nothing so shattering to his prestige as last night's episode had ever happened before. But it was characteristic of his honesty that he silently conceded this, and did not try to defend himself by petulance and bluster.

"Thomas," said his wife, "can you stop drinking?"

"Yes, of course I can," he replied, raising his eyes to hers with that steeling of the blue which was characteristic of the man in moments of emergency or conflict.

"But will you?" she persisted.

"Yes, I am through with the stuff forever," he replied; and his word was good. From that day to his death he never again took a drink of liquor, although he frequently administered it to others in cases of illness. His descendants have, so far as I know, been similarly abstemious.

GRANDMOTHER'S INHERITANCE

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IT WAS two or three years after the Kennedys moved to Indiana when news came, belatedly as usual, of the death of Martha's father. Then, after several more weeks or months had drifted by, the word came that the estate had been administered and divided, and that Grandmother's share was Five Hundred Dollars in cash; it should have been written all in capitals, it seemed so important. But such were the primitive conditions of the time that the dictum was that she or her agent with power of attorney must come after the money, to satisfy the records by acknowledging receipt of the money, releasing the bondsmen and so on—a rigmarole of legal verbiage.

What was to be done? The family needed that \$500, but couldn't afford to employ a lawyer to go after it. Grandfather's teaching, farming and marketing were keeping him busy from before dawn until after dark.

"I'll go myself," said Grandmother.

"How will you go?" asked Grandfather. "There's the railroad only part way to Madison and—"

"I'll walk," announced Grandmother. "I can't afford to be paying a lot of that money to railroads and stagecoaches."

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

She was strong, courageous, keen in mind as a whip, but even her husband, who knew her capabilities as no one else did, demurred at this. However, she gradually beat down his objections. This was a decent country, she argued, nobody would hurt her, she would see the old home again, have a visit with the kinfolks, and it would really be a pleasant experience. He knew she could do it if anybody could, and at last he gave in. That they both were willing to entrust a rosy, firm-fleshed, still comely woman in her latter thirties to the open road on foot and carrying \$500 on the return trip speaks volumes for the behavior of Midwestern America of those days.

Little Caroline, assisted by older brother Thomas and by the counsel of her father, would keep house while her mother was gone. Grandmother made careful preparation for the journey. She fashioned a pair of moccasins, the pioneer's favorite outdoor footwear, from skins home-tanned in the neighborhood, and a sort of cap of squirrel skins. She made a leather belt with a pouch for the money, which she wore next her body, and for traveling expenses, a coin bag of moleskin or weasel skin, I've forgotten which, fastened with a drawstring and carried in her skirt pocket.

A long, well-sharpened skinning knife was cleverly hidden in a holster made into her cloak on the left side, and finally, she carried a stout stick, mostly for defense against savage watchdogs, though she would not have hesitated to use it on a human animal, if necessary. And so, in the spring, after the frost was out of the ground and the worst of the spring rains seemed to be past, she bade farewell to her family, with not a few tears shed on both sides, and set out on her 250-mile journey.

She was three weeks and more on the way. Bad weather of course halted her at times for a day or two at a stretch; though more than once she plodded for miles through the rain before reaching a likely-looking stopping place. Only two or three times did she lodge at village "hotels," then all too often renowned only for indigestible food, tobacco spitting and bedbugs. On other nights she stopped at private homes, choosing one of the more decent-looking ones when convenient; offering to pay everywhere, but never permitted to do so. To the day of her death, she never ceased praising those kindly folk who took her in, gave her of their best, made her as comfortable as their means would permit, and would accept nothing in return. She encountered all sorts of sleeping conditions, of course, but after her usual stint on the road, never had any trouble in losing consciousness in a few minutes.

Of course she aroused great curiosity everywhere, a common reaction in the country and especially in a pioneer backwoods country, upon the appearance of any stranger. Her only explanation was that she wanted to go back to visit the old home and kin in Kentucky and couldn't afford railroad and stage fares; and in those days that sounded reasonable enough—though for a woman to undertake such a hike alone was unheard-of, and must to some of them have marked her as rather eccentric.

Arrived at Carlisle, the county seat of Nicholas—for her father's home had been taken into that county—she was footsore and weary. She transacted her business, rested and visited for a month or more with kinsmen, and then turned her back on Kentucky for the last time, with

the precious little fortune snuggled against her body, eyeing every stranger she met a little more keenly than before. Only once was she frightened.

It was as she was tramping through the hills of southeastern Indiana, where there were occasionally some rough folk to be found in those days. The dusk of a cloudy, lowering evening came early as she reached a house, plain but commodious for the time and region, and was accepted as a guest. No less than three hard-faced men appeared at the supper table—she learned nothing of their relationship, if there was any—and were very inquisitive as to her reasons for journeying so far alone. She evaded the truth even more factitiously than usual. They had a sinister appearance to her, but she had had no hint of molestation, nothing but kindness on the whole trip, and she told herself that she was misjudging the fellows.

Another unusual thing was that when it came time to go to bed, she was given a small room to herself. She lay a while, listening to talk and movement in the two adjoining rooms. The sounds gradually subsided, lights went out and she, tired from long day's tramp, fell asleep.

She did not know how long she had slept when she awoke with a start and all her senses keenly alive. Instantly she saw that there was a thread of light under the door, and from the next room she heard the murmur of men's voices. She had no way of knowing what time it was, for no clock struck in the house that night, and she never owned a watch. Why were they up and talking again in the middle of the night? Was she the subject of the conversation? Did they suspect the truth about her argosy, and were they planning to rob, perhaps to kill her?

The talk was pitched in such low tones that she could not distinguish a word, and she was sure that even if she had had an ear at the crack of the door, she could not have heard. She did not dare to get out of bed, lest its creaking betray her. Even at night she wore her money belt and kept her knife close at hand. The murmur went on without ceasing. She reached to the nearby chair for her knife and cautiously sat up in bed, leaning back against the spindles at its head, awaiting trouble, if there was to be any. Still that monotonous murmur, with never a sound of moving about! It was mysterious, fearsome. She drew the covers up about her shoulders and waited.

How long the colloquy went on, she could not be sure. It seemed an hour or more; it might not have been so long. Finally, it appeared to waver and subside; there were sounds of cautious movement—another word or two—and the light went out.

Now her nerves tensed until they were like piano wire; she sat with eyes and ears straining toward the door, expecting at any moment to hear it stealthily unlatched, to see some black bulk moving in the darkness. But there was no sound as the minutes passed save the fife and fiddling of the little musicians of the night, the cry of an owl from a near-by wood, the distant bark of a fox—or were these man-made signals? For perhaps half an hour, she sat in this intense strain, her eyes darting from the vicinity of the door which she could not see to the window which, partly tree-shaded, was just a faint blue-black rectangle surrounded by inky blackness. . . .

And thus she sat until morning, palpably hours. What relief the first muted cheeping of birds, the first pale gray of the cloudy dawn was to her spirit, she had no words to

describe. Only one of the men was at breakfast, and they were very civil to her, refusing pay for her entertainment. As she walked away along the road with an ominous raindrop falling now and then, she looked back again and again, but saw nothing more of the family. She could never convince herself that there was not something sinister afoot that night. Perhaps the men were horse thieves planning a foray or in a night conference with some pal who had stolen in from elsewhere.

They had a few such gentry in far southern Indiana, and a little later some counterfeiters, too. The great majority of the folk down there were as fine as any in America, but there were certain groups of the baser sort, such as Pete Macartney's gang of thieves and counterfeiters, who were troublesome around Civil War times, and the Reno brothers' gang of train and bank robbers in the latter sixties, antedating the James boys in those thrilling lines of business by several years. The last of the rural gangsters, five in all, were taken from jail by citizens and lynched on one tree in Ripley County in 1894.

When Grandmother reached home, she had been absent nearly three months, and had enough to talk about for a year. That money seemed a godsend, for there were debts to be paid, tools and equipment to be bought, shoes and clothes sadly needed by all the family—after all, it didn't last long. But it apparently brought on another incident which is a part of this story.

Naturally, the couple had whispered the facts about Martha's inheritance to two or three close friends, and from them it had spread to the whole neighborhood and no telling how much farther. Banks were few and shaky

then, and the precious cash was kept in the house, as money always was; and seemingly there was someone who knew of it and coveted it, and whose scruples were weaker than those of the other neighbors.

A few weeks after Grandmother's return, Grandfather went on a marketing trip to Crawfordsville, leaving her alone with the children, but little concerned over that, for robbery and burglary were things almost unknown in the vicinity. But one night Bull, the watchdog, a burly fellow of mixed breed, set up a terrific barking, a bark of the angry, snarling kind which was plainly not a reaction to faint, distant sounds or the mere mystery of the night which seems to set a dog's nerves atingle. He kept it up so long, with furious outbursts every little while, that Grandmother decided that someone was prowling outside the fences in the dark, with evil designs on her money. She finally threw on her cloak, stepped outside the door and called the dog. When he came, she patted him and said, "Take him, Bull!"

At that, he was away like a shot, and very quickly there was the clash of conflict—scuffling, loud snarls from the dog, which in a moment or two turned to yelps, two or three subdued cries of agony which the stout fellow evidently tried to hold back, but couldn't. Then there were sounds as of someone or something beating a disorderly retreat, and Bull came limping back to the house, whining with pain. Grandmother took him inside and found that he had been stabbed twice with a sharp knife; once in the breast, and one long cut across the shoulder.

That the edge was sharp was proved by the fact that the shoulder stroke had cut the hairs in its path as cleanly

as if it were done with a razor. The stab in the breast had apparently not touched a vital part, but it was deep and bled freely. Grandmother used the styptics known to home medical practice of the time—ashes, cobwebs from the dusty beams above—and at length staunched the bleeding, dressed the wounds and put Bull to bed by the fireside. He wanted it understood that he still had fight in him, so he pricked his ears and growled at every small sound outside.

Sending the children back to bed, Grandmother took the family's old Colt navy pistol, one of the first of the type ever made (I have it yet), from the bureau drawer, oiled the trigger and tried it, put a fresh cap on the nipple and laid it on a chair by her bedside. She slept lightly and brokenly, but nothing else happened to disturb the peace that night, and within a few weeks more, the money had for the most part been so distributed that it was no longer any great temptation for the predaceous.

They never found any clue to the identity of the marauder.

DOCTORIN'

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THE styptics used on Bull's honorable wounds were the same as those employed in pioneer homes to check the flow of human blood—ashes or soot from the fireplace, cobwebs from the grimy ceiling where they had hung for months. In summer or autumn the fine powder from the inside of a puffball, the little globular fungus which dries on the ground, was another well-liked agent, which was also snuffed up the nose to stop hemorrhages there. As a healer, Grandmother may have applied coon grease to Bull's hurts, or perhaps a salve made by pouring hot lard or tallow over the blossoms of the tulip tree. This was good for cuts, wounds, burns, hurts of any sort. Anyhow, Bull recovered, whether because of her medicines or in spite of them.

Whisky (or brandy) was the basic element of all internally applied remedies. The underlying idea of most of them seemed to be that of mixing a jumble of the bitterest stuff obtainable into ardent spirits, producing a potion which made gall by comparison taste like honey. There were at least three good reasons and sometimes four, why such a brew made an excellent medicine; the alcohol stimulated the patient; it had the traditional

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

almost unbearably bitter taste of true medicine, which gave it authority; the taste was so bad as to insure against any temptation to use the stuff as a beverage. And finally, there might sometimes be some real virtue in the ingredients.

The heavily wooded level lands of central Indiana, with their slow-moving streams and occasional marshy tracts, produced billions of mosquitoes per acre, and therefore much malaria and ague; and of course the house fly rode in on the settlers' wagons and did its bit. In August and September every year, illness was the chief time killer and subject of conversation. Most people in the country were either flat on their backs or having daily chills or tending others in the family who were ill.

Not until large areas of the forest had been cleared and the sunlight let in was this condition much improved. But of course there were other ailments and causes thereof aplenty. Overeating as a result of vigorous toil, too much fried food, an unbalanced diet, overwork, bad sanitation, exposure, many unconscious abuses of the body, brought most of the other ills of the flesh, though many were not known by their modern names. Tuberculosis and typhoid were notably absent; they came later, as did the so-called "social diseases."

Physicians were scarce and mostly of the two-fisted, cornfield variety, who believed that the way to overcome disease was to give it a sock in the jaw. Even a medical college degree of those days is considered a joke by the profession now. Let it not be thought that those early, rustic-trained doctors did not acquire some real lore from their predecessors or from their own experience. But their methods were rugged, in keeping with the

frontier life, and the medicine kit contained only a few powerful agents, such as calomel, jalap, castor oil, quinine, tartar emetic, and blue mass. Calomel was the favorite weapon; the professional rule seemed to be, When in doubt, use calomel. A few still carried a lancet and bled patients for fevers, but this was passing out by 1840. With an old-fashioned practitioner like this on the job, the rise of a two- or three-degree fever would "indicate" first, a bloodletting, and then a drastic, two-way cleanout by emetic—usually lobelia—and cathartic. The bleeding might be omitted, but the other two were inevitable, and households came to use the same methods in their private medication; for money was so scarce that doctors' bills must be avoided, if possible. Any old-timer will remember seeing the father of the household lifting a little mound of powdered quinine, as much as he thought the occasion justified, on the end of his jackknife blade, and pouring it down the throat of an ailing member of the family, sometimes himself. Swallowing it was a matter of course; coming to grips with the ugly necessities of life was a commonplace in those strenuous days.

At the climax of an illness, as much as a quart of brandy was sometimes administered, to stimulate the flagging heart. In spring, when the blood was supposed to be thickened and impure, "bitters" made by mixing decoctions of prickly ash, burdock, sarsaparilla, poplar, dogwood or wild-cherry barks, singly or in combinations of three or four with whisky, were supposed to be thinners and purifiers. But the bark must be taken from the north side of the tree, where all the goodness had not been burned out of it by sunlight.

Two or three tablespoonfuls of such a specific per day

and sassafras tea drunk as a beverage during at least two meals daily brought the blood down to summer consistency. Tansy bitters was a favorite morning tonic for warding off miasma and giving one strength for a day's hard labor. The bitter tea, not of General Yen, but of ragweed, would cure diarrhea and dysentery, and mullein was sure-fire against coughs and bronchitis. The belief in the curative virtue of roots was enormous. For example, for yellow jaundice, you boiled together specified quantities of the roots of sarsaparilla, red sumac and bitterroot, and of the *bark* only from wild cherry and yellow poplar roots. A half gallon of this extract was mixed with a gallon of hard cider and two ounces of madder, and you took a half—no, not a half teaspoonful—a half teacupful three times a day! If that didn't change your color, nothing would.

It is said that half of the country-born babies of that era died before they were four years old. Only the great fecundity of the pioneers kept the population growing so rapidly. Croup and cholera infantum were the chief destroyers. Teething gave much trouble, too, but many mothers knew that the child's discomfort at such times could be eased by hanging a dried mole's foot around its neck. For cholera infantum an excellent remedy consisted of a double handful each of dewberry roots and cranebill roots and two gallons of witch hazel leaves, boiled down and added to a pint of brandy, with a pound of loaf sugar thrown in to overcome the baby's very intelligent objection to anything so nauseous. "The best French brandy" was specified, but the truth of the matter was that log-cabin folks usually had to fall back upon country-made applejack.

That my grandparents, without a loss and with few serious illnesses, reared five children to tall, strong, healthy manhood and womanhood—my father, five feet ten, was the smallest of the four brothers—was a matter of pride as well as a gratification of parental love, and gave them prestige as authorities on medicine and child hygiene.

One reason was that they detected and discarded many of the superstitions of the age. Grandmother, who never while life lasted slackened in her devoted service to her fellows, became the favorite midwife in her neighborhood, and delivered scores of babies during the twenty-five years that she lived in Putnam County; responding to a call at any time and anywhere, and never asking a cent of pay. Now and then some grateful mother or family would bring around a bushel of potatoes, a ham, a jar or two of wild honey or a home-woven coverlet, but these tokens of appreciation were much fewer in number than the cases she handled.

They had no chemical antiseptics then, but they knew that such a thing was needed. They knew nothing of germs, but they had found that heat would check whatever it was that made a wound become malignant, and so they used hot grease—a restorative calling for true fortitude. When my father and his brothers and sister went barefoot—as they did perforce in childhood, often for eight or nine months in the year—cuts, sores and stone bruises were common, and if these promised to grow troublesome, Grandfather would use hot goose grease or tallow melted to the simmering point on them. Naturally, the youngsters concealed such injuries as long as they could, for the torture of such applications to a wound

could be compared only to the red-hot pincers and other playful correctives for heretics and lycanthropes in the Middle Ages. Grandfather, while applying the stuff, always exhorted them, rather smugly as it seemed to them, to bravery and self-control; but his own time came.

While playing some rough game with his pupils at school one day, his ankle was badly abraded. He washed the blood from it, bound the ankle with a clean cloth and tried to forget about it. But his sons presently noticed that he was "favorin'" that leg—that is, he was limping; infection had set in. Father, then perhaps twenty years old, and his youngest brother, Henry, the only two boys at home, urged him to use the hot-tallow treatment, but he stubbornly insisted that the leg would be all right presently. He not only did not want to admit the need for doctoring, but truth to tell, he dreaded the cauterization. One day, after an argument about it, he bound a strip of fat meat on the wound, lay down and fell asleep. Grandmother was out somewhere, perhaps at a neighbor's. Ben called Henry aside.

"Get a lump of tallow and heat it," he muttered. "We're going to treat that leg."

While Henry heated the grease, Ben cautiously unbound the piece of side-meat from the wound.

"Here, Ben," whispered Henry, when he came with the tallow. "I won't put it on; you do it. Pa's goin' to make a big noise when this stuff touches that sore, and . . . you do it."

Father cupped the spot with a clean rag, so that as little healthy skin as possible would be blistered, dipped up a spoonful of the simmering grease and poured it

right into the festering wound. Now, to do a thing like this to a sleeping man is pretty rough procedure. Henry was right; he made a big noise. With a yell that shook the rafters, he fairly leaped into the air, scattering grease and upsetting his progeny. It took several seconds to get him quieted, but when he grasped the situation, he admitted that the boys might be doing the right thing and submitted to their ministrations. Within a few days the leg was healed.

One day several years later, when my father and Henry were clearing some ground on the home farm, Henry's ax glanced from a log and wounded him severely in the foot. He was bleeding frightfully as his brother helped him to the house. Of course they sought the usual styptics—cobwebs, ashes and so on—but none did much good. Grandmother decreed that the wound must be sewed up. She dipped a stout linen thread in melted tallow and turpentine—one of the best of healers, by the way. Of course she had nothing but a common sewing needle.

"I'll sew it myself," said Henry with set teeth. "It won't seem to hurt so much."

So he took the needle, and while Grandmother gave directions and Father pressed the gory lips of the wound together, Henry took stitches through his own flesh, Grandmother tying and cutting the threads at each stitch. By the time the job was completed, they all looked like butchers. Luckily, the wound came through without infection, and that foot took Uncle Henry into the Civil War. Heroic? One almost had to be heroic or, at least, stoical in those times. The ones who weren't so were the ones who perished.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

But there was one thing noticeable—one seldom heard a frontiersman complaining of his lot. He accepted his present status as inevitable, though determined to better it when, as or if he could. He had no grudge against the universe, though he had to fight it daily to wrest his living from it and to prevent its destroying him.

THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER

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THERE were a few seasons when Grandfather wasn't teaching in his home neighborhood; in fact, there were two or three winters in those twenty-five years in Putnam when he didn't teach at all, but gave his whole time to his farm—and so his children were at times under the ministry of other pedagogues. One of these whom Father remembered best was Michael Scroggins.

The teachers of those early years in the Midwest were a motley crew, and there probably wasn't a diploma in the whole outfit. In fact, I am safe in saying that a majority of the rural teachers had never done anything of the sort before. They included Yankees, Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, all drifting westward, vaguely looking for something to turn up in a business way, and meanwhile following the line of least resistance by teaching school, which some people thought was the special province of chaps who were too lazy to work.

There was even a French Canadian here and there, left over from the old regime. Though he might be better qualified culturally than some of the others, yet he just didn't fit in. His Gallic antics and tastes didn't suit the neighborhood, and as a rule, he didn't stay long.

Governor Noble had complained publicly in 1833 of the want of competent teachers, and said that because it included so many "transient persons from other states, combining but little of qualifications or moral character, the profession is not in that repute that it should be."

What an assortment of characters, good, bad and indifferent, they were! Judge David D. Banta of Franklin, an old friend of my father's and mine, recalled among the ones he knew the one-eyed teacher, the one-legged teacher, the singlehanded teacher, the teacher who had fits, the teacher who got drunk on Saturday and whipped the whole school on Monday, and the one who started out as a preacher but drank too much booze, so his parishioners thought, to qualify in godliness, and so turned to pedagogy. He didn't mention the teacher who looked with lustful eyes on the girl pupils, who sometimes tried to do more than look and who semi-occasionally succeeded—but he was there, too.

A teacher like that didn't last long in a community, and the occasional rough experience of such a one was a great moral lesson to the others. But let it not be thought that all the teachers were misfits. While some were remembered by the more thoughtful pupils in after years for their incompetence, yet not a few were praised for their scholarship. Some were remembered by both good scholar and dolt for the whalings they gave, yet others for their devotion and good fellowship.

The schoolhouses were mostly of logs, of the same sort that Grandfather had known in Kentucky, though there were instances of school being held in a barn, a blacksmith shop or a smokehouse. The ones built for school purposes were often made to face the south, so that the

THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER



door might stand open in fair winter weather and let the sunlight in, helping to light and warm the room. There had been a school law of 1824 which required that the building must have a floor at least a foot from the ground and that the ceiling must be at least eight feet from the floor; also it must be "finished in a manner calculated to render comfortable the teacher and pupils"—which ought to have been good for a laugh anywhere. Once in a while a patron would announce a wood-cutting bee for the school, but most of the time, Grandfather's big boy or young man pupils had to take time off from their studies every two or three days to go into the adjacent forest and cut firewood.

The schoolbooks—when there were any—were the same haphazard lot that had been used in Kentucky—just whatever happened to be around the individual pupil's home; Dilworth's and Webster's blue-backed speller, half a dozen breeds of arithmetic, including one called the *Western Calculator*, an occasional Murray's or Pike's Reader or the *Columbian Orator*, though often they had to fall back on the Bible, or the pupil might be permitted to read in some book which he brought from home; *Gulliver's Travels*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Sandford and Merton*, *The Life of Marion* and various dream books were among those maltreated in the schoolroom. Some more advanced pupils might rise into the stratosphere of Kirkham's Grammar or Olney's Geography.

There were few or no attempts at organizing classes. In some studies the whole school recited en masse, in others individually. Every teacher created his own curriculum, if you could call it that, which might vary from year to year, according to circumstances. In many

schools in early days, it was given over almost entirely to spelling, reading and writing, arithmetic being optional and often neglected, because the teacher knew little about it himself. Not until 1850 were licenses issued in Indiana, certifying that the holder could teach arithmetic "to the single rule-of-three"—which, as I have already explained, meant solving such problems as "2 is to 4 as 7 is to what?"

In Grandfather's early days, the whole roomful of pupils except a few tiny ones who as yet scarcely knew what the alphabet was all about, was in the spelling class. They just began at one side of the room and spelled all the way around. Reading required a little more gradation but was still the most haphazard thing imaginable. Writing was of course a matter of toiling with the individual student. The master would set a copy by writing some uplifting sentiment or Biblical text in his best manner, and then criticize the efforts of groups of two or three students who strove to imitate it at the writing desks.

A new law of 1837 authorized the circuit court to appoint examiners to look into the qualifications of teachers and certify as to their fitness. This might have eliminated many incumbents had it not been for the fact that the teachers often knew more than the examiners. Grandfather, with his seventeen years of experience, had no trouble. Barnabas Hobbs, later a state superintendent of public instruction, said that when he first made application for a license, the only question asked him by the examiner was one devised by some higher-up, "What is the product of 25 cents by 25 cents?" and neither Hobbs nor the examiner knew what it was all about.

"We had only Pike's Arithmetic," said Mr. Hobbs, "which gave the sums and rules. So how could we tell the answer when such a problem could not be found in the book? The examiner thought it was six and quarter cents, but was not sure. I thought just as he did, but this looked too small to each of us. We discussed its merits for an hour or longer, when he decided that he was sure I was qualified to teach school, and a first-class certificate was given me."

But sometimes the examiner ran across a candidate whom even he outranked in mentality and culture. One such, the dumbest of the dumb, pestered an examiner for a certificate, despite the latter's more or less plainly expressed opinion that the would-be instructor of youth didn't know enough to pound sand into a rathole. Finally the examiner, plagued beyond endurance, seized a pen and wrote, "This is to certify that Mr. Amaziah Smith is qualified to teach a common school in Washington Township, and a damned common one at that."

That favorite small-town play for amateurs, *The Deestrick Skule*, of which there are a thousand versions and which is still putting stitches in the sides of many an audience, was never half so funny as would be a talking picture—if we could just turn the clock back and film it—of some one of the real backwoods schools of eighty or ninety years ago. The trouble would be that modern audiences couldn't be convinced that it was not overdrawn. Some of the masters believed in pupils' studying aloud; it was said of such a teacher that he conducted a loud school. Owen Davis, a Spencer County teacher, adhered to this system and was also a devotee of Euterpe. He took his fiddle to school, and while the pupils conned

their lessons with a sound like the tumult of a revolutionary mob, the master sat in a hickory-bottomed rocking chair on the rostrum and sawed away like mad at "Old Zip Coon," "Hob or Nob," "Croppies Lie Down," "The Devil's Dream" and other "hoppy" tunes.

Some teachers had to have their booze during school hours but took it as slyly as they could, often hiding their bottles outside the building and going out for a nip now and then; but bless you, the pupils knew what was going on as well as the teacher did. How could they help it when he distributed that breath of his about the room—at times, in extreme cases, finding a slight difficulty in saying "resh'tashn," or regarding them with something resembling the fixed stare of a goggle-eye bass.

Mr. Scroggins both chewed and smoked tobacco, which in his neighborhood, oddly enough, were regarded as bad habits for a teacher, and not to be indulged in during school hours. He banned such indulgence by the pupils on the school grounds, though there were some boys even in their teens in those days who took a plug or a twist to school and gnawed off a chew at recess time. But the tobacco odor was unmistakable on Scroggins's clothing, and it was observed that at the noon hour he took no part in any of the boys' games, but always strolled into the woods alone.

The boys naturally became curious, and one day some of them stalked him to a hide-out deep among the thickets. There he had a pipe and tobacco hidden in the hollow of a tree, and there he sat for the better part of the hour, puffing luxuriously. The boys made no scandal of their discovery, for despite his eccentricities and his strictness, despite the fact that he sometimes

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

lashed a fellow upon slight provocation or on rare occasions seemingly none at all, yet he showed no favoritism, he had something of the real teacher in him, and the boys had a sort of unexplainable liking for the big, rough, raw-boned, beetle-browed fellow.

On the day when school opened, he posted upon the wall, written on a sheet of foolscap, his penal code. Father recalled some of the items:

For whispering, 2 stripes.

For leaving room without permission, 3 stripes.

For laughing out loud, 4 stripes.

For swearing or vulgar words, 5 stripes.

For throwing paper wads, 6 stripes.

For lying, 7 stripes.

For fighting, 8 stripes.

There were others, but Father couldn't remember all of them. Sometimes Scroggins himself would have to consult the code when some unusual malfeasance outraged public order. Most teachers had a vague sort of scheme of punishment for various offenses, though none that I ever heard of save Scroggins ever wrote theirs out and posted it. The younger set used to wonder when a new teacher came to the community how many lashes he would consider adequate for this and that improbity; though as a matter of fact, it usually depended upon the mood he was in, how much harassment he had received from the pupils that day, and how well he liked or disliked the offender then under the rod.

There were a few teachers like the one I used to hear of who walked about the room with a stick about four feet long under his arm, and now and then, without warning, would suddenly whack with brutal force some

chap who sat at just the right distance for a good swing of the gad. A visitor protested after school that the effect was bad; the pupils didn't know why they were being hit, and a spirit of revenge would be engendered. "Those boys can never be whipped amiss," replied the teacher, "and it has a good effect upon the rest of the school."

The toleration by parents of severe corporal punishment gave some of the coarser and rougher characters among these makeshift teachers full opportunity to vent what we would now call their sadism. The cat-o'-nine-tails hung on some school walls and the ferule lay ready on many a teacher's desk in Indiana. Some just used a heavy leather strap. There were those who would kick their pupils' shins, others would pull the boys' hair, slap the face and ears with all their force with the open hand, or pull ears until they would swell painfully.

I am happy to say that not only my Grandfather but my Father frowned upon these medieval chastenings. Father's only instrument during his teaching career was the switch, though he often used the milder punishments, such as standing the offender on the rostrum or in a corner or crowning him with the dunce's cap. The "leather specs" were a favorite device of some teachers—a crude imitation of spectacles cut from leather, with only a small opening in the center, where the lens would be, so that the wearer's vision was circumscribed, and to see anything, he had to turn his head this way and that in comical fashion. To heighten the absurdity, the temples were often made of twigs or bits of wire or string. Some schools kept three or four pairs of these on hand, and that many delinquents might be wearing them at once, perhaps moving about at the teacher's order, on

and off the rostrum, stumbling and peering about like owls in perfectly side-splitting fashion. Some teachers condoned or even authorized laughter, jeering and would-be witticisms from the rest of the school at their expense.

Such were some of the worst aspects of the pedagogue of those days. I have already said that there were others of a far different type, and some, like Michael Scroggins, who were in a middle zone, with streaks of the best and the worst in them.

Scroggins always had a drowsy period after the noon hour. He had provided a comfortable rocking chair for himself, and when the afternoon session began, he would draw the chair up near the fire and have a nap, during which the pupils were supposed to con their lessons. If any concerted deviltry silenced the singsong hum of the "students," it was apt to awaken the master.

The fireplace, like many another of those days, had a hearth of earth, pounded hard with a maul, and the lintel above it was not of stone, but was a heavy timber, in which sparks sometimes lodged and started a glowing coal.

The water bucket stood not far off, with a tin dipper or gourd floating in it—and parenthetically, what a source of diversion the water bucket was in the old-time school—the uplifted hand four or five times a day with the request, "Kin me and Asa go for a bucket of water?"—the slow journey to the spring and return still slower lest some of the water be spilled, the necessary pause to throw stones at a squirrel, the hands that shot up when the bearers appeared, seeking the job of passing the water around the room—all these were pleasant breaks in the

monotony of study. Well, as I started to say, there stood the bucket, and the rule was that whomsoever first noticed the lintel alight must throw a dipper or two of water on it without unnecessary fuss or delay.

One day during the teacher's rest period, while he sat with head hanging over the back of his chair, open mouth pointed heavenward, punctuating the buzz of study with sounds like the ripping of a handsaw through a dried gourd shell, Ben Kennedy, whose natural propensity for mischief had developed considerably since he entered school a few years before, noticed a spark glowing under the lintel, and instead of extinguishing it, said to a neighbor, Rufus Smith, "Go up there and blow on that spark till it blazes. Then I'll holler 'Fire!' and wake old Scroggins up right sudden, and we'll have some fun."

Rufus was one of those born to be commanded. He tiptoed to the fireplace and blew dutifully until the coal started a tiny blaze and threw off sparks of its own. But just as the sport was about to begin, a spark flew into Rufus's eye, and he let off an earsplitting "Ow-w-w-w!" which outdid anything young Ben had planned, meanwhile dancing about the hearth with his hands over his eye. Scroggins, who had one foot hooked under his chair, sprang up, still groggy with sleep, tangled with the chair rocker and fell sprawling on knees and elbows—whereat the school exploded with laughter, but hushed quickly and became preternaturally solemn as he arose.

"Throw some water on that fire!" he shouted, and then, "Rufus, what are you doing here at the fireplace?"

Rufe, embittered by the painful outcome of the joke, promptly bellowed, half crying, "The' was a spark

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

ketched in the mantel, and Ben Kennedy says to me, 'Go up and blow on it till it blazes and I'll holler 'fire' and skeer old—the teacher, and we'll have some fun.' ”

“Come here, Ben,” commanded Scroggins. “Is this true, what Rufus says?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And so you'd have hollered 'fire,' instead of throwing water on it, hey?” asked Scroggins, in a tone of ominous sarcasm, reaching for his switch.

“Y-yes, sir,” stammered Ben, much less sturdily.

“Well, you're going to holler 'fire' when there ain't any blaze,” grated Scroggins, “and water won't put it out.” Whack! whack! whack! . . .

By next morning the memory of the ridiculous figure he had cut in his awakening had so corroded Scroggins's soul that he felt compelled to salve it by licking Ben and Rufus again, as well as practically the whole male contingent among the pupils except the very smallest, on the ground that everybody was *particeps criminis*; anybody with a spark of decency in him could have thrown water on the blaze and halted the affair while Rufus was encouraging it.

Despite his severity, Scroggins took a sincere interest in the progress of his pupils, and taught them to the best of his ability. They sounded his weaknesses, but they had a considerable degree of respect for him, after all, both because of his earnestness and his ironhanded discipline; for the majority of human beings have enough of the dog in them to respect anybody who makes them toe the line. Pioneer parents, as I have said, usually saw eye to eye with the teacher in this respect. They were a forthright people, who had little patience with halfway measures.

Most of them had learned ethics the hard way and it stayed with them, as lessons learned that way have a habit of doing.

There were times when Scroggins was singularly lenient and even forgiving. In his school, as in many others, there were no classes in arithmetic save in the most elementary grades. After clinching with and throwing the multiplication table, the pupils were permitted to amble along in a go-as-you-please fashion, solving the problems in the book without reciting—for without a blackboard, how could one make a public demonstration? Bright pupils who liked mathematics might go for weeks without making contact with the teacher on the subject. The problems, worked out on individual slates, were displayed to him from time to time, or he would be asked to give aid—if he could—in resolving a knotty one. There were some teachers who weren't anxious for the pupils to go very far, as they would soon carry him beyond his own depth; in fact, there were not a few to whom even square root was a *terra incognita*.

Scroggins always responded readily and with interest to a request for aid in arithmetic. Pupils all carried goose-quill pens in those days, which the teacher mended or recut for them, often while others were reciting; and it was a popular habit to carry the pen over the ear in school hours, for the scholarly air it gave, rather than for convenience.

Young Ben Kennedy was good at “figgerin’”—in fact, so good that I rather suspect he liked to show off to his teacher by going up frequently with problems solved on his plate, showing rapid advance. On one such trip with his pen behind his ear, he conceived a new bit of

fun. While the master bent over the slate, discussing the problem aloud and making figures as he did so, Ben took his pen from behind his ear and slowly drew its feathery tip in a circle around the other's bald head, close to the rim of hair, while the youngsters in front who happened to be watching stifled their merriment delightedly. Scroggins, absorbed in his task, two or three times raised his hand to brush away the supposed insect—at which Ben would snatch it away, then let it alight again.

The act was such a popular success that Ben, swollen with Thespian egotism, must needs put it on again. And then two or three other youngsters—with the monkeylike imitativeness characteristic of the race in childhood—tried it. Honest Scroggins, a model of concentration in a scholarly task, never seemed to suspect anything curious about this concerted harassing of his bald scalp by the six-legged fauna. But of course the pranksters, as might have been expected, overdid the stunt and came a cropper.

One day a jovial, moonfaced boy named Zeke, who could seldom stifle a laugh when it threatened him, took a problem up to the teacher, and my father, feeling the need of diversion, went up with his slate at the same time and stood on the other side of Scroggins. While the latter, deeply engrossed in Zeke's project, bent over his slate, the chief joker drew the tip of his pen along the bare pate. Zeke began to swell with a laugh, but Ben shook his head at him.

"So if the cost of one horse," explained Scroggins, "multiplied by two is three and a half times the cost of the other horse"—he made a vigorous swipe at his head and

THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER

scratched the tickled spot with the slate pencil, whereat Zeke lost control and bellowed, "Haw! Haw! Haw!"

"What are you laughing at, sir?" demanded the master, angrily.

Zeke's comic mask quickly disappeared, and that of Tragedy took its place; his eyes rounded with alarm and he stuttered, "A . . . a . . . a . . ."



"Come, out with it!" commanded Scroggins, clutching him by the shirt and jerking him closer. Terrified by the huge brows with the eyes glowing like black fire in the caverns underneath them, Zeke sputtered out, "When you put up your hand just now to scratch your head, you thought it was a louse a-bitin' you, but it was Ben Kennedy ticklin' you with his pen-feather."

Ben had to admit the impeachment, and by shaking the two of them some more, the master shook out of Zeke

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

the revelation that this wasn't the first offense, and that others beside Ben Kennedy had been guilty. Scroggins was embarrassed.

"I remember now that I have noticed something at times," said he, "but I had no idea it was due to any human agency."

He drew the big brows together in solemn cogitation.

"Gentlemen," said he at length—Father was perhaps aged twelve, some of the other misdemeanants still younger—"there is no rule in the code for such a case as this. I shall take this grave offense under advisement until this time tomorrow, when I shall announce the penalty."

Nearly twenty-four hours of anxiety followed. The culprits were like prisoners on trial, waiting for the jury to come in. It would help the story if I could say that they tossed sleeplessly on their beds that night, but such would not be the truth; their slumber was as sound as a healthy boy's always is. After all, they had been licked before; it would be no new experience for them.

On the following morning, they were lined up before the bar of justice, and knitting those ominous eyebrows at them, Mr. Scroggins stunned them with his verdict.

"Well, boys," said he, "I have weighed this case from every angle, and while there was a grave breach of discipline and one not to be condoned under ordinary circumstances, I have decided to forgive and forget, and lose no more time over such nonsense. I do this partly because I allowed myself to be made a dupe."

To the day of death, I don't suppose any of those boys ever ceased wondering at this extraordinary and unexplainable bit of clemency.

Father's last teacher in the common schools was a specimen of the best type of the rural pedagogue of pioneer days, the sort whose sacrificial service, whose leadership in the social and cultural life of their communities deserve more praise than I have space and words for. They sat by the bedsides of the sick, they delivered eulogies for the dead, and often wrote both their obituaries and their epitaphs.

Of such was Riley Dawson, a man of considerable ability, undoubted refinement and sincerity, who had the faculty of inspiring those of his pupils who were susceptible to such influence. He spent much time with them, out of the schoolroom as well as in it, and while his gentle presence actually gave a different tone to the atmosphere, yet for most of them it did not curb their enjoyment.

When reprimand became necessary, he never raised his voice and his countenance changed little in expression. He had words aplenty for any occasion, and if it was a particularly ugly one, he could sear the transgressor's soul with them, all uttered in that level tone, but with something of the cold, blistering effect of our modern dry ice. If in extreme cases he used a switch, he did it with evident reluctance. Although they had not met in thirty years, my father's spirit really donned mourning when Mr. Dawson died at the age of ninety-six and was buried in the little cemetery at Bainbridge forty years ago.

THE SECOND GENERATION

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EIGHTEEN-FORTY-SIX dawned; Uncle Sam was spitting on his hands with intent to lick Mexico and annex some territory, and Thomas and Martha Kennedy discovered that they had a man-son, for Thomas, Junior, aged twenty, allowed that he believed he'd enlist.

He wasn't really mad at Mexico; it was just that sort of urge that used to beset young men more often when they had fewer opportunities to travel and see the world than do those of today. So Thomas went over to Indianapolis, where young Lew Wallace, later a noted general and author, but then only nineteen, recruited a company in three days. Patriotic farmers hauled the rookies in their wagons to Edinburg, thirty miles south of Indianapolis, the northern terminus of the railroad which was still slowly crawling from Madison toward the capital. Thence on the wooden-seated railroad cars to Madison, a novel and wonderful experience for many of them, and then by river they went southward. They reached the front in time to fight at Monterey and Buena Vista, and fall into confusion and bickering over tactics and the bad generalship of the higher-ups, all common manifestations in a volunteer army.

THE SECOND GENERATION

Robert, then in his teens, was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker. Benjamin and Caroline were proceeding with their education, as was little Henry Clay, now wrestling with the First Reader. In the year 1847, when brother Thomas, under Old Rough and Ready Taylor, was marching toward the Halls of Montezuma, Benjamin, at the age of fifteen, entered Indiana Asbury University (now De Pauw) at Greencastle.

Only ten years previously the institution had begun its existence in a small school building (but calling itself a university from the very start), and it is said that some of the first young men students who came striding out of the surrounding woods were barefoot. Now it had a three-story brick building, a faculty of seven or eight, and more than two hundred students. Its principal object at the start was the creation of Methodist parsons—much to the disgust of veteran evangelists like Peter Cartwright and Alfred Brunson, who had little education themselves, and who alleged that theological schools only turned out “second and third rate preachers, learned dunces.”

Father and Aunt Caroline, the two children of the family who showed a tendency toward scholarship, were fortunate in finding patrons who gave them their chance. Thomas and James Fife, two fairly prosperous farmers who had no children of their own became interested in the youngsters because of their studious habits—an interest which grew to be almost paternal. Father very early developed a talent in woodcraft and a way with animals and bees which pleased the Fife brothers and which they found useful.

They gave both of the young people employment of one sort and another, for the rule then was, Help only

those who show a disposition to help themselves. Aunt Caroline, who was five years older than my father, coached him in his studies, and when he had got all that the common schools could give him, the Fifes added to his own purse such money as was needed to piece out his tuition at Asbury, also aiding Caroline in her attendance at a small "seminary" in Greencastle, for Asbury did not receive female students until twenty years afterward.

The university was six miles from the Kennedy home, and if the weather was not too bad, Father walked there and back, morning and evening. If he stayed in town in the worst of weather, he could get board and lodging for 50 cents a week, and he might find wood to cut at 20 cents a cord, mornings and evenings, sufficient to pay it; for a good axman could chop two cords in a working day. He spent two consecutive winters at Asbury, and they were among the most thrilling of his life. (Later, between teaching terms, he went back for odd semesters enough to make up another year.) His natural propensity for mischief led to some pranking, but boy though he was at the start, for once in his life he took something seriously; his educational opportunity was too important, his moral obligation to the Fifes too great to be jeopardized by getting into scrapes.

Ben was a bit too callow to cut much figure in the college debates on "Whether the citizens of republics should assist the patriots of Monarchical governments in revolutions whose aim is the establishment of civil liberty," "Is the practice of law consistent with sound morals?" or "Are writings addressed chiefly to the imagination injurious in their tendency?"—for most of the real debaters might be anywhere from five to ten

years older than he was, and furthermore, he was not often in town of evenings to enjoy them. But there was a long, spindly chap named Dan Voorhees—later famous in the halls of Congress as the Tall Sycamore of the Wabash—who even at twenty-one was a two-fisted, no-quarter debater and spread-eagle orator.

On Commencement Days the whole family went to town, as did other farm families; for that was one of the great occasions of the year for folk hungry for entertainment and instruction. Every member of the graduating class delivered an oration, not to mention addresses by the president and one or two other dignitaries, and the presentation of diplomas. The folks left home early in the morning so as to get good seats in the chapel, took their lunches with them, sat there from eight o'clock to noon while young orators with windmill gestures, impassioned periods and studied cadences examined such subjects as "The Object of the Creation of Man," "Duty as a Guide to Life," and "The Influence of Conscious Immortality on Mental Effort."

At noon the family ate their lunch—fried chicken, cold biscuits, pickles and pie—right where they sat, so as not to lose their places, and let the crumbs fall where they might. Then, through most of the afternoon the oratory continued, and at last, the auditors drove home in the summer sunset glow, feeling that they had seen a good show and gotten a dose of real culture.

A revolution in education was coming in Indiana. In 1848 the legislature put it up to the people to decide whether or not they wanted free, state-supported schools. Some of the larger taxpayers fought the proposition bitterly.

"It'll increase the tax rate," they cried; "put a heavy burden on the backs of those who have sweated and saved and accumulated a little property; give idle youth a chance to loaf in school instead of working. It'll take money away from the thrifty to bestow benefits on families who are poor often through their own laziness and vicious habits."

When the referendum took place, it was carried by a vote of only about 7 to 6, with another one-and-a-third having no opinions on the subject. Nevertheless, that small margin was sufficient to set Indiana on the glory road in education. From then on, new laws came thick and fast every year. The school term was ordered to be not less than three nor more than six months; regular provision was made for school funds and so on. A man in Putnam County tied up a part of the program for several years with an injunction, but the legislature passed new laws to evade his objections, and made them watertight.

Caroline and Benjamin Kennedy now decided that it was an opportune time for them to get into the business of education; for by this time an occasional rare woman teacher was to be seen in the rural areas of the Middle West. Fifteen years before, Governor Noble was saying that women lacked one prime requisite for such a job; namely, the muscular strength to grab a big lummoX of twenty or twenty-five and whale him against his will.

There were not a few rough-and-tumble fights between teacher and pupil in those days, maybe all over the room, knocking seats, youngsters, teacher's desk and chair helter-skelter and like as not winding up with black eyes, bloody noses, split lips, shirt collars torn off;

and sometimes the big fellows ganged up on the teacher and fairly threw him off the premises.

But a few years later, it began to be argued that this sort of thing wouldn't happen if the teacher was a woman. No backwoods youth, no matter how recalcitrant, would ever think of laying his hand in violence on a woman teacher. By 1852 the state superintendent of public instruction was boosting the idea.

"Females are not only apt to learn, but they are peculiarly apt to teach," said he. "It is natural for them, their instinctive propensity to love, cherish, caress, amuse and instruct the young. And it is equally natural for children to love females, to yield to their influence and be persuaded by them to obedience." He hadn't yet had opportunity to learn that after some ten or twenty strenuous years of teaching, a woman can become as hard-boiled as any man; in fact, some of them are that way when they begin. The worst cut I ever received from a switch in my boyhood, I took on the back of my bare calves from a woman teacher.

Father had not completed his first winter at Asbury when someone read in an Indianapolis paper the news that gold had been discovered in California, that unknown strip of faraway coast which Thomas had just helped to wrench away from Mexico. The item did not seem so exciting at first; but as the year drew on, more reports drifted back by the long way, around Cape Horn, through New York and then westward to the middle states, and it became evident that a great rush to the new Eldorado would begin next spring. In every neighborhood you heard that Jim This and Bill That were going; Ed Tother was signed up with a party from

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Indianapolis, and some man at Lafayette was trying to make up an expedition; the necessities for the kit of an Argonaut were canvassed everywhere—so many shirts, so many socks, so many pounds of flour, so many of beans, so much coffee, sugar, whisky . . .

Father may have been slightly tempted by the thought of adventure, but not in the least by the prospect of striking gold in California and becoming rich. The song

*There's all the gold in the world, I'm told
On the banks of the Sacramento*

didn't mean a thing to him. And here one begins to get a portrait of the man. I have never in my life seen anyone to whom money meant so little. His brother Thomas, too, just back from Mexico, heard the excited talk and invitations of the promoters with dull ears. He had seen the world, he'd had his bellyful of hiking over mountain and plain, and now he was ready to settle down to work and pay for his fun.

It was a long time before Aunt Caroline could get a school, for the prejudice against women teachers was still strong in many minds; but Father landed one immediately; in fact, he was taken on in his home district, from which Grandfather was temporarily absent. He was not even examined. Examine a man who had spent two years in Asbury? What was the use? And so, in the autumn of 1849, at the ripe age of seventeen, when he had just begun experimenting with his father's old razor, young Ben Kennedy took his stand on the rostrum of the very school where he had been a pupil only yesterday, as it seemed, where he had pestered and been birched by Scroggins.

THE SECOND GENERATION

Only a boy, yes; but so he was ten, twenty, forty years later in his love of fun and his irresponsibility in money matters. I do not think he felt any pang in leaving his boyhood behind him; in fact, he had not consciously done so. Although he had gone without shoes sometimes until frost lay white upon the earth, he seemed to himself to have had a happy childhood and great advantages—loving parents, what he considered a comfortable home, plenty to eat, fishing and swimming in Big Walnut and no more work than he could stand up under, coon hunts and rabbit hunts with his father and other teachers, play-parties, dances, singings—and finally, two glorious years of college. Life had been good to him, indeed.

There were not a few pupils in his school who were older than he, and some young giants who were bigger; which naturally raised the question whether he'd try to lick these chaps, some of whom were nearly grown when he was still a little shirttail boy. Some of the leading huskies rather wanted to see him try it. In athletic prowess he had them beaten, and that gave him prestige. He never met a man who could outrun or outjump him, and he was particularly superior at certain rustic "track events" such as the hop, step and jump or two hops and a jump. In the hardy outdoor games of the time—Bull Pen, Town Ball, Two-, Three- or Four-cornered Cat, Duck-on-Davy or Duck on a Rock, Dare Base, Old Sow Out or Dickey Pen, he could hold his own with the best of them. He was proficient in wrestling, rustic style, and even a bit of a boxer, though in ordinary backwoods fighting there weren't any rules—it was punch, gouge, kick, clinch, anything to embarrass the antagonist. The savage nose and ear biting of the hillbillies and earlier

flatboat ruffians had been ruled out as uncivilized, but almost anything else was correct.

But young Ben Kennedy had a magnetism and a spontaneous smile which went far towards enlisting the majority of any school on his side. He opened this first one of his career in the orthodox manner by getting there ahead of anybody else, so that he might keep tab on the order in which the pupils arrived; for the first to appear had the choice of seats—boys and girls, by the way, still sat on opposite sides of the room—and was first to recite—a rather doubtful, Spartan reward—and so on down the list. He seldom let a recess or noon hour go by when he did not take part in the boys' games and assist in organizing them.

For several days, everything seemed to be moving peaceably enough, but the close observer might have seen a watchful look in the eyes of some of the larger males which indicated that trouble was fermenting beneath the surface, and it was not long before the test came. One day a stocky, strongly-built young man several years older than the teacher threw a book at another, perhaps just by way of setting the *putsch* in motion. Father had become convinced that this fellow and possibly three or four others were plotting an uprising. For several days he had been carrying a large switch in his hand or under his arm as he walked about the room, as many teachers did—a sort of wand of office, though it had its deeper meaning, too. He now strolled calmly over to this young man and said in a quiet tone, "Why did you do that, John?"

"Jest because I wanted to," replied the smart aleck, lolling back and looking up at him impudently.

"Don't you think a person ought to be punished for disturbing the peace like that in school?" asked Father.

"If they's anybody around here big enough to do it, maybe I ort," grinned the confident fellow.

That was the cue. Scarcely had the words been uttered when Father, who had chosen his position for the purpose, seized him by the collar with his left hand and with his right rained blows with all his strength upon the broad back. The astonished victim tried to rise, but was shoved back and half a dozen more lusty strokes laid on while he struggled to escape. Then his teacher loosed him and walked calmly back to his desk. Not another one of the conspirators stirred.

Father's motto was Foch's—"Attack! Attack! Attack!" and it worked in this case, for any rebellion that might have been planned never developed further. Next day he remarked in a casual way, "I propose to keep order in this school without punishing anybody if I can; but remember that if I have to do it, I'll have the school with me, the parents with me and the state of Indiana backing me up."

Grown girls were sometimes a bit of a problem, too, to a young teacher, now that a sort of rural society was developing. There were glamorous rustic debutantes who showed a tendency to use their sex appeal on him in their own behalf, to pull out the surely-you-wouldn't-be-cross-with-a-poor-little-girl-who's-working-so-hard stop, some who insisted upon flirting with him and an occasional one who would have married him at the drop of a hat. If the teacher succeeded in keeping his balance, such young ladies might have to be reminded now and then that there is a time for this and a time for that.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Incidentally, young Ben Kennedy remained heart-whole for another decade and more. In fact, he showed so little ardor as a beau as years went on that some of the young women in a certain district where he was teaching tried to take him in hand and make a ladies' man out of him, but did not achieve great success. It was not until he was nearing thirty that he finally fell in love.

NEMESIS OVERTAKES URIAH

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WHEN he began teaching, Father found equipment in general almost as primitive as when his parents came to Indiana, thirteen years before. There were a few more books, but he still had to whittle pens for his pupils, still had to send some of the big fellows out into the forest once or twice a week to cut firewood.

However, after he had been teaching two or three years and looked a bit more authoritative, he began organizing logrollings among the patrons for the benefit of the school, and enough wood might be cut and hauled in a day for a month or two of firing—great green backlogs which burned slowly and held fire for days, smaller sticks for quick curing and dead fagots for kindling.

Many of the school buildings erected fifteen, twenty or thirty years before and innocent of attention since were in a dilapidated condition. The state superintendent lambasted them in 1852, saying that they were mostly “dilapidated log buildings situated in some out-of-the-way place in the woods, frequently in the midst of the largest and deepest mudhole of the county, surrounded on every side by stagnant pools and heaps of logs and underbrush, infecting the air with their deadly miasma and

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

rendering it almost an impossibility to reach the house, and when there, equally problematical whether it will ever be possible to get away; a place fit for nothing else, and of course not for a schoolhouse, but selected for this purpose because the land can be turned to account in no other way. The house itself is a little square cabin, with a rickety door with broken hinges, which, not allowing it to be moved in either direction, keep it constantly half open upon the mudhole without."

He dwelt upon the loose, rough puncheon floor with its many large crevices, "somewhat resembling our corduroy roads and forming a fine substitute for the rack or stocks of our ancestors." The walls with the chinking fallen out of them, the gaping door, the broken windows and open floor "render the house a fitting temple of the winds, while the sievelike roof affords many a shower bath, and is the only means ever used to clean the house." "The capacious fireplace, shedding good cheer over the room," was the only thing he found to praise.

He overdrew the picture a little, for though some of them were like that, not all of them were. Those whose doors were down at the heel so that they stayed open all the time were apt to be used as summer houses by hogs and sheep, and they planted colonies of fleas which remained the year round. Grandfather always took care to see that his schoolhouses never got into such condition as this.

The state was redistricted after 1850, and many new frame and brick schoolhouses began to be erected, located so that no pupil would have to walk several miles, as some were now doing. Adverse court decisions in 1853-1854 halted the program, and some of the build-

ings stood in an unfinished condition for two or three years.

In general, customs were the same as when Grandfather first stood before a school in Indiana. They had one new gadget, a paddle which hung beside the door with "In" cut and inked on one side of it and "Out" on the other. When a pupil gained permission to leave the room, he turned the paddle to read "Out." When he came back, he turned it to "In." This was considered an enormously clever device. But boys and girls still played separately on the school ground, and the teacher still took part in the boisterous games of his male pupils, and still went coon hunting with them out of school hours. I hear that coon hunting has been revived all over the eastern half of America in these latter days, and that city bankers, lawyers and businessmen do not disdain it—a curious reversion to the pioneer character. I hear that there are coon-hunting clubs—exclusive, too!—in the East, and that they are even breeding coons and restocking lands with them for the chase—all of which sounds funny in the ears of an old-timer who can remember when we had more coons than we knew what to do with, when they were classed along with foxes, minks, hawks and snakes as predatory animals, nuisances which ought to be destroyed.

Father and his boys had a coon hunt or some other evening fun almost every week, always centering at the schoolhouse. True, there were other affairs—corn shuckings, always followed by a dance in the evening, sometimes the dance without the corn, with a single fiddler usually supplying all the music as the revelers "chassezed" and "allemanded" and swung through the

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Virginia Reel or Old Dan Tucker or the Portland Fancy; often with a caller bawling out the figures, as in Hull's Victory—"First two give right hands across and balance in line. . . . Turn with left hand. . . . Right hand back and balance. . . . Turn with left hands. . . . Down the center and back. . . . Right and left. . . . " Or, if he was a sort of show off, he might have a rigmarole of his own;—

*Balance one and balance eight;
Swing 'em to the corner like you swing 'em on the gate.
Bow to your lady and then promenade,
First couple out, to the couple on the right,
Lady round the lady and the gent solo;
And the lady round the gent, and the gent don't go.*

Then there might be a church social or a spelling match or a wedding infair or a charivari—popularly pronounced "shiverree"—for a newly married couple. But most weeks the coon hunt or schoolhouse meeting supplied the only evening fun. If the night was too bad for hunting, teacher and boys might spend the evening in the schoolhouse, partly in playing games such as Blind Man's Buff, partly in impromptu but serious debating of such questions as "Which is the most destructive agent—fire or water?" or "Resolved, that the pen is mightier than the sword"; and generally winding up with a feed, which one of the party had been told off to prepare in the fireplace—roasted potatoes or squash, baked apples, perhaps a chicken, and coffee.

Often after a coon hunt on a cold night, the party would come back to the schoolroom, stir up the fire, throw on more wood, set the coffeepot to boil, move the

seats back against the wall and have a game; for your old-time countryman liked to keep late hours as well as anybody once in a while.

Father told me so many yarns of those evenings that it is hard to keep them apart in my mind; but I remember vividly the one about young Randal, a chap so proud of his activity and smartness that one evening when he was It in Blind Man's Buff and had caught several, he said he could catch the rest of them with his feet. I must explain that in those days, the blindfolded person had to catch all the rest before his chore was over. Those who were caught stood in a group and gave him tips as to where the others were.

Well, Randal, with shoes off, rolled and flopped around the floor like a fish, catching the others between his feet and very proud of himself. But presently one fellow whom he was pressing hard darted across right in front of the fireplace, and Randal, stabbing at him with his feet, kicked over the coffeepot and got a live coal inside his jeans pants leg. In the split second before he realized this, jerking his feet away from the fire, he threw them upward and the coal gravitated almost to his waistline. With a howl of pain, he leaped to his feet, ripping his trousers open in front and yelling, "Boys, I'm afire!" But as he did so, the coal, broken apart, fell back down his leg, leaving a trail of little burns and blisters as it went.

Like many another young countryman of his day, he wore no drawers, because underwear cost money, and the ember had a good chance at him. Father had a tin box of coon grease on his table, and Randal, stripping off his trousers, stood bare-legged while the unguent was

applied. Someone said, "Say, you ain't finished your job. Put on the blindfold; there's three more to catch yet." To which Randal retorted, right in front of the teacher, that he'd be damned if he would, and went unrebuked.

Benjamin Kennedy not only loved games himself, but he believed in organized play as a social agency, quite as strongly as any modern recreational promoter; and as long as he was physically able, he not only supervised it but took a leading part in it himself. Perhaps that was why he never had to consult a doctor. But in their play, the rustic youth of the period cherished a do-or-die, beat-the-other-fellow-or-bust spirit which often led them to absurd extremes, and Father sometimes went as far as the next one in this. Nothing illustrated this better than the Fox and Hounds game which they used to play at the noon hour—one of my father's favorite sports. It was like the old English Paper Chase, only no torn paper "scent" was used. Sometimes the hounds could see the fox, sometimes they followed him by his footprints in snow or mud, by the broken bushes and trodden weeds and grass where he had crashed through.

Having gobbled down their noon lunch in about five minutes, the chase was on, regardless of the alleged inadvisability of violent exercise just after eating. The problem for the fox was to leave his "den" at the edge of the schoolyard, with a 150- or 200-yard start—Father, when he was fox, sometimes asked no more than a hundred yards—and to avoid being caught until he could get back to his den, which was supposed to be done by the beginning of the afternoon session. In that limited time, they might run two, three or four miles.

As the teacher was always in the game and as he

NEMESIS OVERTAKES URIAH



carried the only watch in the whole institution, it may readily be understood that they sometimes trespassed a little on the regular time for books, and no one was the wiser. In fact, there are rumors that in his younger days, on at least two occasions when he was the fox, the hounds had the teacher so blocked off from the school-house and he was so unwilling to let himself be beaten that he didn't get back until late afternoon, after time for dismissal.

As he grew a little older, he abandoned that sort of folly, but there were times when snow was on the ground when he still waded for fifty yards or so in an almost icy stream to delay the hounds until they could pick up his trail again. Every fox did that when it became necessary; wet feet, even in winter, meant little to those hardy chaps. Why, there was one stocky youth named Walter Selch who, as the fox, had been caught so often by his teacher that on one occasion when he was the quarry again, he said to the other fellows, "I'll beat Ben Kennedy today or bust a hame-string."

As usual, Father outran the other hounds and gained rapidly on Walter. Seeing that he was in imminent danger, Walter resorted to the desperate expedient he had planned beforehand. Heading for a near-by creek, he leaped from a tolerably high bank feet-first through a thin coating of ice into a deep pool. When Father appeared, there he was in the water nearly up to his armpits. "Now, Ben Kennedy," he said, triumphantly, "you can't get me."

Without a moment's hesitation, Father leaped in, almost on top of him, pushing Walter's head and shoulders under water as he did so, just by way of

clinching the argument. When they climbed out, streaming, they were almost breathless from the cold shock. As soon as he could speak, Father said, "I could have squatted there on the bank and frozen you out, Walter, but this way, it was more fun." Try to enter into the spirit of that remark, you moderns! They ran to their homes to change into dry clothes, and went back to school as unconcerned as if they hadn't just thumbed their noses in the face of double pneumonia. Walter's son, now aged more than sixty, lives near me today, and we sometimes get together and laugh over these rough pranks of our sires.

At another time, when Father was the fox and there was a light "skiff" of snow on the ground, he ran into a big log barn at the edge of a farm clearing, climbed to the loft, and leaping from a small window in the gable in Douglas Fairbanks style, he seized the bough of a big oak tree which stood just back of the building. Hooking his legs over it, he made his way to the main trunk, climbed that to a place high up where it forked into three or four, and with his feet in the crotch, flattened himself against the almost perpendicular stem so as to be least visible from the ground.

Meanwhile, the hounds followed his tracks to the barn, and thought they had him. Joyously they dashed in, some of them standing guard by door and windows outside, to see that he didn't slip through their fingers. They searched every nook in the building over and over, completely mystified as to what could have become of him. It never occurred to them that a man might swing himself into the tree from that window. At last, they held a consultation. Tracks leading into and out of the barn

indicated that its owner had visited it from his house, some distance away, that day, and the final decision was that the fox must have craftily walked in that man's footprints away from the building, and so made his escape.

A committee of hounds followed the tracks to the house and made inquiry, but the family stoutly maintained that they hadn't seen Mr. Kennedy that day. At length, thoroughly baffled, the hounds started walking back towards the school, whereupon the fox dropped from the tree, detoured around them at his best speed and was sitting, grinning wisely, at his desk when they returned.

It was on the night of one of their coon hunts that Father had an opportunity to even a score with an old acquaintance. When he was a boy of nine, going out to a back pasture every late afternoon to drive up the cows, he was waylaid one August day by Satan, not guised as a serpent, but in the form of Uriah Smith, the almost grown son of a neighbor, and led into paths of sin. Uriah was a tall, gangling, grinning, plausible chap who liked the company of younger boys, and who knew more about the topography and quality of the neighbors' orchards and vineyards than was really decent. He, too, went after the cows at the close of day, which, so gossip said, was about all the work the folks could ever get out of him.

"Ben," said the tempter, "do you like watermelon?"

"I sure do," replied the boy.

"How would you like to have a big, juicy one right now?"

"It'd taste mighty good," admitted Ben.

"Well, do you know Tom Darnell's got a watermelon patch down here on the crick with some of the finest melons in it I ever seen?"

Young Kennedy hadn't heard of it.

"He's got too many," said Uriah. "He cain't eat and he cain't sell 'em all, and a lot of 'em jest goin' to lay there on the ground and rot. Le's go git one."

This was a shock to Ben's sensibilities, for he had been strictly brought up. He drew back at once. "But that would be stealing," he objected.

"Aw, no it wouldn't. He wouldn't never miss it, and he wouldn't keer if he did. It'd jest be takin' one that would lay there in the patch and go to waste, anyhow, and this way, it'd do somebody some good."

He had a clinching answer for every objection, and the pliable child soul, tempted by the thought of a delicious bait of melon, slowly yielded; for no boy of that age is as Gibraltar-like in his morality as the old McGuffey Readers and moral storybooks tried to make their readers believe their heroes were. So Ben followed the serpent to the edge of Mr. Darnell's melon patch, which was surrounded by a high rail fence. At the point where they approached it, a little gully began inside the patch, ran under the fence and became a considerable ravine outside. A large tulip tree, felled by a storm, lay across the ditch just outside the fence, and its still green foliage made excellent cover for the marauders.

"Now you can crawl right under the fence in that dreen," Uriah pointed out, "without nobody seein' you. I'll stay here and watch."

"Why don't we both go?" wondered Ben, feeling very shaky about the whole project.

"Oh, th'ain't no use of us both goin'. This here is the nicest place to eat a melon—and I'm too big to crawl under the fence right handy, and besides, I'm taller'n you and I kin see furdur. I'll stay here and see that nobody ketches you. Pick out a good one, now."

It was a bit confusing to Ben, their going so stealthily about a job which, as Uriah declared, Mr. Darnell wouldn't mind at all and would really be a favor to him; but the infant mind becomes so accustomed to being confused and baffled by adult answers to ethical problems that it comes to accept many of them without question, especially if they chime nicely with the youngster's own desires. So Ben finally crept into the field, thumped a few of the big green globes—he had already begun to learn something about the mellow plunk which indicates ripeness—and carried one out to the big poplar. Uriah had a long-bladed jackknife ready; he cut the melon into halves and they ate it.

Thereafter, for several days the practice continued, the pleasant juice of the melons sweetening little Ben's conscience a bit, though it was never quite easy. Meanwhile, Mr. Darnell had discovered small-boy tracks in his field, missed a few melons, and scouting a bit, found the withering rinds and seeds by the fallen tree. Ben, as his pilfering went on, grew bolder and more confident; but one evening as he was snipping a melon from the stem, he stopped with a violent start, and looking up, saw Mr. Darnell standing beside him with a sarcastic smile on his countenance.

"Who is with you, Ben?" he asked.

Ben hesitated.

"Tell the truth," admonished Darnell.

The boy saw that paltering would do no good. "Uriah Smith," he muttered at last.

"Ah, I thought so," exclaimed the man. "Where is he?"

"Over by that big poplar that fell down outside the fence."

"Well, come with me. We're going to see him," invited his captor.

Ben would rather have been excused, but that appeared to be out of the question. Never again in his life, he said in after years, did he feel so humiliated, so completely crushed as at that moment. Now for the first time he realized the enormity of his fault. They made a detour, so as to advance along the fence and be covered by it. Uriah, wondering what was detaining Ben, came from behind the tree up to the fence to peer through it just as the others approached.

"I want to speak to you, Uriah," said Darnell; but Uriah, with an inarticulate exclamation, whirled and dashed away into the wood. The others stood looking after him until the sound of his crashing through the brush died away.

"Now you see, Ben," said the farmer, "that he's a dirty coward as well as a thief."

There was a moment's pause, and the boy said, "Are you going to tell Pa, Mr. Darnell?"

"If you'll leave my melon patch alone," said the man, sternly, "and promise me never to associate with fellows like Uriah Smith again, I won't say anything to your father or anybody else about this."

Ben promised eagerly, and the kindly farmer, after giving him a little lecture on the difference between

Mine and Thine and the dangers of evil associates, let him go.

Ten or eleven years had passed since then, and one night in early October, Father and several of his pupils met at the school about eight o'clock for a coon hunt. They were clustered around the door, discussing plans when they heard whistling on the road, and a figure walked into the little circle of light—Uriah Smith.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Goin' for a coon hunt," said one of the boys.

"Gosh, I'd like to go along," declared Uriah.

Father was not greatly pleased with the prospect. He knew that Uriah, now a man of thirty, but still with a fancy for the company of youth, went on an occasional nocturnal foraging excursion, and never alone; he always inveigled someone into going with him, for truth to tell, he was afraid of the dark. If he walked a road at night alone, he always whistled or sang to keep up his courage.

"If we let you go with us," said Father. "Remember, this is strictly a coon hunt and nothing else."

"Oh, sure," agreed Uriah, disingenuous as always.

The route they chose lay across Thomas Fife's farm—there was no such thing as a No Trespassing sign then; you went where you pleased—and on the way they traversed a lane which led along the side of Fife's orchard. Just inside the fence were some big peach trees—they grew larger then than they do now, and were seldom molested by insect pests—of the October-ripening kind, perhaps Yellow Crawford.

"Gosh, I smell peaches," said Uriah. "Ain't this Tom Fife's peach orchard?" And then, after a moment or two, "Le's eat a couple. This looks like a good tree. Come

on, boys," and he threw a long leg over the fence. Some of the boys showed a tendency to follow him.

"Leave those peaches alone," commanded their teacher, sternly. "I'm not going to have Mr. Fife's property raided." Whether he could make his words good was quite another matter, for some of the group were young men grown and not always amenable to discipline outside of school hours, especially in a situation like this. As Uriah leaped the fence and climbed into the fork of a big peach tree, the young teacher's memory flicked back ten—or was it eleven?—years to Darnell's melon patch. Was his old tempter delivered into his hands? He would soon put it to the test. He knew that Mr. Fife had a big dog, evidently as yet oblivious to the doings at the back of the orchard, for they were down wind from him. No sooner did Uriah hoist himself into the crotch of the tree than Father shouted at the top of his voice, "Shoot him, Fife! Shoot him, Fife!"

Instantly there was an answering alarum by the dog from the farmyard, growing louder as he emerged from his kennel and ran around a building. "Come on, boys, let's go!" said the teacher, and they set off, running down the lane.

"Hey, wait! Wait for me!" cried Uriah. In his excitement he lost his footing, clutched wildly, grabbed a bough above him, it broke under his weight and he came to earth with a shower of peaches thudding around him. Springing to his feet, he flopped over the fence and followed the others down the lane at his best speed, his big splay feet—in tall boots with breeches stuffed into their tops—whapping the hard earth with sounds like pistol shots.

At its farther end, the lane debouched into a tract of woodland. "Keep to the left, boys!" Father called as he neared the woods. "Follow right behind me. There's a big hog wallow here." He knew the Fife farm as he knew his own father's, but he rightly guessed that Uriah, not so well acquainted with it, wouldn't know about that wallow, a pool of muck and slimy water some five or six yards across; and of course it was too dark to see it.

Uriah was pounding along far in the rear, while the dog, hindered by having to leap two or three fences, was nevertheless gaining on him. By the time Uriah reached the pitfall, the pursuer was already woofing down the lane. Into the mess Uriah went pell-mell, and at the second step, one of his boots stuck in the mud and pulled off. He hadn't time to stop and retrieve it; he went right on with one bare foot—and twenty yards further on, he blundered into the hogs themselves—about a score of them luxuriously bedded down for the night in dry leaves—and fell headlong into their midst.

Instantly they were in an uproar, leaping up with loud "Oink! Oink! Oinks!" of irritation and fright, knocking Uriah this way and that and trampling him as he crawled and fought his way through them; and just then the dog arrived. The disappearance of Uriah among the swine sort of confused the issue for the dog; he lost the thread of the plot, but determined to do something in defense of the manor, anyhow, he seized a big sow by the ear and tore it off; at least, that's the way Mr. Fife reconstructed the scene later—for the story soon got around the neighborhood, and eventually Uriah made full confession as to his part in it. He escaped during the rumpus between the dog and the pigs, but his one bare

NEMESIS OVERTAKES URIAH

foot was so mauled by hog hoofs and stones and stubs and roots and thorns during that dash through the woods that he couldn't walk for a week.

Father hadn't yet heard that line, "The mills of the gods grind slowly," and so on, but a sort of original paraphrase of it passed through his mind.

NEW HORIZONS

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BEN KENNEDY had taught seven terms in Putnam County—three in his home district, two years at Brick Chapel and two at North Salem—and still he was only twenty-four. But by 1856 he was beginning to feel the need of a change.

His sister had been teaching in a neighboring district for several years, and his father was still in harness. With three of the family holding school jobs in a county still not too thickly settled—well, there were now young home-grown aspirants to educational places who began to grumble that there were too many Kennedys cluttering up the county schoolrooms; it was a family monopoly! Caroline and Ben had always had the backing of the Fifes in their application for positions, and under the whisperings of criticism, Father's pride now began to suggest that he might better strike out into new territory, entirely on his own. Furthermore, his departure would relieve the pressure of jealousy on his father and sister. If any one of the Kennedys must leave the county, he was the logical one to go. As it turned out, the chief reason for his going was shortly afterward removed, for

Caroline married a fine young neighbor and left the school rostrum for good.

However, Father had heard much talk of the culture and progress of Johnson County, of its building a number of new schools, but suffering from a shortage of competent teachers. Its county seat, Franklin, the home of a struggling young Baptist college, was only twenty miles south of Indianapolis. He wouldn't be far from home—maybe forty or fifty miles by crow flight, though farther by rail; for now you could travel all the way from Greencastle via Indianapolis by the steam-cars.

So on a Saturday afternoon, March 17, 1856—the Kennedys were still Irish enough to remember that it was St. Patrick's Day—young Benjamin rolled into Franklin on the primitive little Madison and Indianapolis passenger train, with conductor, brakeman and baggageman twisting away at the hand-brake wheels to bring the cars to a stop—Mr. Westinghouse's meritorious invention not yet having appeared. The newcomer knew no one, had written to no one in the town. He came in the haphazard way common to those who adventured into a new country in those days, seeking a location. He had never been so far from home before, had never gone out seeking a job among total strangers.

Carpentbag in hand, he walked the streets of the little town for a while under a cloudy late winter sky, staring about him, feeling very lonely and not knowing how to take hold of the situation. Presently he came across a middle-aged man, apparently from the country, who had paused momentarily on a street corner as if trying to recall what it was he wanted to do next. His overcoat was buttoned up to the neck, and the March wind blew

his iron-gray beard about. If he had not been standing still, instead of hurrying along, as everybody else was, Father might not have spoken to him, and the course of his life might have been considerably altered. As it was, he approached the man and said diffidently, "How do you do, sir."

"Howdy-do!" barked the other, turning a searching gaze on him.

"Do you live around here, sir?" asked Father.

"Eight mile west of here," was the reply, with the abruptness which, as one soon learned, was his natural manner; and then, as Father hesitated a moment, "And what might your name be?"

"Benjamin F. Kennedy."

"Mine's John Doty," thrusting out his hand. "Where do you come from?"

"Putnam County."

"And what business ye in?"

"I've been teaching school over there for seven years," replied Father. "Just closed my winter term and now I want to make a change. I'm. . . ."

"I believe you're just the man we're lookin' for out in our district," snapped Mr. Doty. Father later became accustomed to that sort of action from him, but at the moment it was something of a shock. "I'm township trustee," Mr. Doty went on. "We had a feller that tried to teach our school, beginnin' last fall, but the big boys made it so lively for him, he finally give up, and the rest of the winter we haven't had any school. They mighty nigh tore the house down and throwed it out the winder. Reckon you can handle a crowd like that?"

"I think so," said Father, modestly. "I've had a few hard cases in my own schools."

"Well, let's go out to my house," decreed the hospitable trustee, "and Monday mornin' we'll start signin' folks up for a spring term. It'll have to be a subscription school, for our reg'lar term of the free school, accordin' to law, is past. That all the baggage ye got? All right, I've got jest one more errand to do, and then we'll go."

It was nearer a ten- than an eight-mile drive, Father thought, over muddy roads through the raw wind, but both men were accustomed to that. Father was a bit dazed by the suddenness with which he had been catapulted into a new job, but Mr. Doty seemed to take it quite as a matter of course. The new teacher learned on the way that the institution for which he had been engaged was known as the Doty School—a not uncommon species of nomenclature, which testified not only to the influence of the family in the district, but to the fact that the plot of ground for the school had been given by them.

He learned later by personal experience and from the mouths of others that the family deserved their high reputation for charity and gracious hospitality. There were half a dozen pupils for him in the home where he spent the Sabbath, some of them young men and women, and among them he made friendships which endured through life.

On the following Monday morning, Father "drew up an article," that is, wrote a few lines at the head of a sheet of foolscap, saying that We the undersigned agree to send the number of children specified opposite our

names to the Doty School for ten weeks at so much per pupil, and so on. On the back of the sheet, while waiting for his host to finish his chores, the young teacher, in one of his whimsical moods, and perhaps a little proud of his ability as an artist, sketched the picture of a bird. Then he and Mr. Doty set forth in a buggy on their round of the neighbors, his host voicing everywhere high praise of the ability of the young man whom he had known only over the week end, telling of how he had "gone through" Asbury University, and making him out a very Horace Mann.

Signatures came rapidly. One of the early signers was Charlie Green, who had been a messmate of brother Thomas in Mexico—though he and Father didn't discover this until twenty years afterward. The sketch of the bird on the back of the sheet struck Green's eye first, and he studied it absorbedly. He turned the paper over and looked at the agreement on the front; then at the back again. Finally he said, "I'll sign four scholars for the Bird School." For some time he could not rid himself of the belief that birds were somehow mixed up in the curriculum.

Thirty-five pupils were procured within two or three days; not at all bad. As a mere afterthought, Mr. Doty said, "Have you got an examination ce'tif'cate?"

"No," said Father. "I've never been examined. Up in Putnam County they didn't seem to think it was necessary."

"Well, they're kinder strict down here," explained the trustee; "and you bein' a stranger, I guess you'd better go into Franklin Saturday and pass the examination, just to make everything reg'lar."

"Do they make it very hard?" Father was a bit nervous at the prospect.

"I don't know," admitted Mr. Doty; "but shucks!" admiringly, "a man of your education and experience ought to be able to answer anything."

So into Franklin Father drove on Saturday, and sought the official examiner's office. That gentleman laid out his report sheets and his list of questions with the solemn dignity befitting the occasion. "The examination will be oral," he explained. He took pen in hand, picked up his question sheet and read the first poser, "When and by whom was America discovered?"

"October twelfth, 1492, by Christopher Columbus," answered Father.

The examiner carefully entered upon his report the result of the test, then squared away and put the second question with the air of one propounding a sockdolager; "If sugar is six and a quarter cents a pound, how many pounds could be purchased with fifty cents?"

Father looked at the ceiling for a few moments, then answered, "Eight pounds."

Again the business of entering the result on the report and then the third proposition, "Correct this sentence; 'Me and Mary is playing.'"

"It should be, 'Mary and I are playing,'" was the comment.

"Excellent!" conceded the examiner, as he made his entry. The test, including the interludes for writing, had occupied only three minutes. "There is one thing more," said the inquisitor, and handed his pen to the candidate. "Write this sentence, 'The good alone are great.'"

Father did so, and the official scanned the penmanship

narrowly. "Very neat writing," commented he. "Plain, legible. You appear to be a competent instructor, Mr. Kennedy. I'll give you a trial license, and next year, according to law, you'll have to pass another examination for a permanent license."

And so Father settled down to work in Johnson County, where he spent the remaining half century of his life; an interesting community with a typical mid-nineteenth century American melting-pot population from North, South and East—Anglo-Saxon names perhaps predominating, though there were many Irish, Scotch, Dutch and French Huguenot surnames. Rural life was the same as in Putnam; quiltings, corn shuckings, dances, play-parties enlivened the scene. Log-rollings and house-raisings had grown much scarcer in both counties in recent years. In one as in the other, school buildings, equipment and programs were slowly improving. School games were the same—the Walter Selch incident mentioned in my last chapter occurred in Johnson—and coon hunting was still a favorite nocturnal sport for teacher and pupils.

By the time Father had ended that first school term, early in June, the harvest season was approaching, and he at once went to work on a farm. He could pitch hay or swing a wheat cradle—a tough job, requiring no little skill as well as strength and endurance—with the best of them; and thus he began welding himself into the life of the county which was to be his home for the rest of his days.

He was given the Doty school again for the regular term, beginning in the autumn. I think it was not until two years after his first test that he passed his second. A

young Franklin attorney, David Banta, later a judge and noted local historian, was examiner at that time, and he and the young teacher were already acquaintances. Father went into town on a Saturday to stand the test. Saturday was no holiday then for anybody but teachers and pupils; court was sitting, and Father met Mr. Banta on the street, just emerging from his office.

"I have to go over to the Courthouse on a little matter," said he, when he learned of Father's errand. "Come with me, and I'll examine you on the way. I'll have to go over there, anyhow, to certify you for a license.

"Now, give me the genders," he began, as they picked their way through the mud across the street, "of the following nouns. Boys."

"Masculine," answered Father.

"Girls."

"Feminine."

"Children."

"Common."

"Books."

"Neuter."

"You'll do, Mr. Kennedy," said the examiner. "Come into the county trustee's office, and I'll have your permanent license issued right away." And that was the last examination that Benjamin Kennedy ever underwent.

COMMUNITY LEADER

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THE preacher and the teacher were the two chief mentors in a rural community. It was a question which of the two ranked highest, but I rather think the teacher had the edge in some ways, for he represented no particular faction—he was nonpartisan. Though he might be a member of some church, his ethical teaching was nondoctrinal, based on the Golden Rule.

On the other hand, Baptists might admit that the Methodist Parson Jones was a good man, but like all Methodists, necessarily a little queer in the head, with those notions about baptism and sanctification and all their other folderol—and vice versa. Moreover, the schoolmaster had probably read more books than the parson; he had a wider scope of knowledge. He had economic and political as well as cultural and ethical knowledge to impart to elders outside of school hours; but let him beware that he didn't become too smart-alecky about imparting it!

Being closer to the young folks, the really competent, sympathetic teacher was more often drawn into giving advice and aid in love affairs than the clergyman. He was the promoter of more than one happy home, the

repository of many secrets. He was chief organizer of social and often of benevolent doings in the neighborhood. He must to a considerable degree be all things to all men. If, passing along a road, he saw a farmer and his boys straining to get a hay crop into the barn while an ugly black cloud slowly rumbled up from the western horizon, the teacher leaped the fence, seized a fork if there was one to be had and pitched hay until the crisis was over. And at other times, when a moral or social emergency arose, he came to grips with that, too, sometimes taking matters right out of the hands of the parents, rightful defenders of the faith—as in the case of Hiram, to mention only one example.

Hiram was a son of a certain family of excellent folk in Father's district; a precocious lad who was spokesman for the younger tribe and sometimes undertook to be for the whole family. One Sunday when Hiram was about eight or nine years old, his parents invited the preacher, the young Reverend Mr. Miller, fresh from college, to dine with them after the morning service. It happened that the teacher was boarding at the home at the time. When the men came home from church and were sitting in the combined living and bedroom, awaiting the mess call, Hiram, in the course of informing the preacher all about the farm, the crops and his own personal affairs, announced that they were going to have fried chicken for dinner, and that his favorite piece was the gizzard.

Presently they were summoned to the dining room, where Hiram was seated on one side of the clerical guest and Professor Kennedy on the other. The chicken was distributed, and Hiram received his gizzard, but something seemed still to be lacking. He looked about the

table with wide eyes and finally asked, "Maw, where's the gravy?"

"I didn't make any gravy today, Hiram," explained his mother in a hushed tone. Perhaps she thought gravy too plebeian a dish for the minister. But Hiram's disappointment and irritation at the omission were abysmal. Forgetting the presence he was in, he exclaimed in a tone of anguish, "Hell, Maw, you know gravy allus goes with chicken!"

For one awful moment, the silence that overhung the scene was like that of death. Both parents were wishing they could sink through the floor; for of course the natural inference would be that Hiram had learned that word at home, which was not true; he had picked it up elsewhere. The father began to push his chair back from the table; apparently, the only course he could think of in his extremity was to take Hiram outside and wear him to a frazzle. Even the preacher was paralyzed; he disliked rebuking the boy at his parents' table; and yet his duty . . . But the teacher immediately and without hesitation stepped into the breach.

"Hiram," said he, sternly, "apologize to your parents and to Mr. Miller at once for your coarse and vulgar language, and don't ever let me hear you using such words again."

The boy had already realized the frightfulness of his involuntary fault. "Please excuse me," he muttered at last, a thoroughly humiliated young man. "I didn't mean to do it."

Later, the preacher shook hands warmly with Father and said, "Ben, you helped me out of an embarrassing situation. I felt that I ought to say something, and yet

I hadn't the authority . . . and . . . I really felt sorry for the boy, too."

Two years after Father received his first billet at the Doty school, he began teaching at Union Village, a hamlet of some fifteen homes in the same township (its name has long since been changed to Providence) and there he grappled with a much larger social crisis. There were in the village, beside the school and a church, a general store and post office, a blacksmith shop, a saw-mill, and last and worst, a saloon which was a stench in the nostrils of the citizens.

Its proprietor, Pettitt, a short, thick-set fellow with coarse black hair, bushy eyebrows and low forehead, was rough and vulgar in speech and conduct, and his place of business was noisy and disorderly. Very little of his income came from the village, for the citizens there were for the most part a sober, church-going lot. Pettitt's customers were recruited largely from the brakes of White River and other near-by settlements which I would better not name, even at this late date, for fear of injured feelings. There would be a gathering of these roisterers—occasionally including women—at the tavern at least two or three evenings in every week, when they would gamble, yell, sing and sometimes fight. Pettitt laughed at the complaints of the citizens; he had them bluffed. But when young Professor Kennedy came to the school, and young Pastor Miller took over the local pastorate, they put their heads together to decide whether something couldn't be done.

The first chore was to put some stiffening into the community backbone. It was difficult to see how anything but extra-legal action could be taken. The country

ordinarily being peaceable, constables were few and far between, and also, freedom of action was greater then than it is today, making it more difficult to deal with a man like Pettitt. Further strong protests made to him were laughed off, as before. Offers were made to buy him out, but his figures, sneeringly quoted, were higher than the community could afford.

Finally, some of the leading church members and school patrons held a secret meeting, at which it was tacitly understood from the outset that force, as a last resort, must be considered. Messrs. Miller and Kennedy were present. After some too violent suggestions had been made, Mr. Miller reminded the others that the very nature of his office prevented his having a part in such action, as it might cripple his influence forever. "But," said he, "I will do all that lies in my power to defend any of you who may have a part in ridding the community of this nuisance."

The schoolmaster was less discreet in his attitude. "I'll tell you how I feel about it," said he, to draw the others out; "if I saw a barrel of whisky lying in the public highway, I'd smash in the head of it—destroy it."

I must explain that at a small rustic groggery like Pettitt's in those days, no bottled whisky was sold. He just laid in a barrel and drew from that until it was empty. It was pretty well known in the village that that one barrel of whisky constituted very nearly his entire stock in trade; for his customers never wasted their time or money on such feeble pap as wine or beer. Tastes were simple, and aside from an occasional craving for brandy, good forty-rod whisky satisfied the rustic palate reasonably well.

COMMUNITY LEADER

There was silence for a few moments after Father's remark, and then another man spoke. "That barrel of whisky," said he, "will be lying in the road near the saloon between the hours of one and two o'clock next Monday morning." And soon after that, the meeting adjourned.

How it happened, Mr. Kennedy didn't inquire too closely, but sure enough, when he happened to pass along the village street about a quarter to two that Monday morning, there lay the barrel, with the chances a thousand to one against any vehicle coming along to disturb it. Pettitt lived a hundred yards or more from his place of business, and when he came down to open up that morning, the first thing that met his eyes was the ruin of his barrel lying in the road with the head stove in, and half a dozen villagers standing around, gaping at it as at a miracle, perhaps inhaling with mixed emotions the rich odor of whisky which arose from the sodden earth. A rock of eight or ten pounds weight lying near by was evidently the instrument of destruction.

We have grown much franker these days in what we put on paper, but even if I knew what Pettitt said in the next few minutes, I wouldn't want to set it down here. Those who were present, however, said it beat anything they ever heard in the way of swearing. A gathering crowd stood listening with awe and admiration, but the great majority of them were very happy over the situation. Presently the pastor and the teacher came moseying along to see what all the fuss was about. They arrived just as Pettitt was declaring for about the tenth time that he'd give twenty-five dollars to know the name of the Gee Deed so-and-so who busted that barrel, and pic-

turing vividly what he'd do to him, both in court and out of it. To the surprise of everybody except Pastor Miller, young Mr. Kennedy stepped forward and said, "You won't have to pay to find out, Mr. Pettitt. I'm the one who did it."

"Oh, a burglar, eh?" sneered Pettitt, not assaulting the athletic young pedagogue as he'd promised to do, but looking as if he would like to try it.

"No," was the reply. "I found the barrel lying right where it is now. I give you my word I don't know who put it there. I was not even informed that it was your barrel."

Pettitt looked about the circle of listeners, and from the knowing smirk on several faces he quickly gathered that there had been an organized plot against him. Very nearly the whole of the population—men, women and children—had assembled at the spot by this time; there were probably not more than two or three who had ever spent any money with Pettitt, and they were not going to lift a finger to help him.

"Now you know," Father went on, "how this community feels about a business like yours. I'm taking the liberty to say that if you'll close up and leave the place quietly, without trying to bully or prosecute anybody, we'll pay for your whisky, and let you leave in peace. Otherwise, you'll find it's a war to the finish. Is that right, friends?"

"Yes," came from several.

"What is your damage?" asked Father.

"Not a cent less'n twenty-five dollars," replied the man, trying to bluster, though he saw that he was licked. As far as the whisky was concerned, the figure was exorbitant, as everybody knew; but they were willing to

concede something for his "good will" and the expenses of moving.

"Men and women," said the teacher, "I'm asking for twenty-five dollars for the good of the community."

"Better not pay him a cent till he gets out," objected several.

"I don't intend to, but I want him to know that we have it ready. Do you agree, Mr. Pettitt?"

Pettitt hesitated, but he knew that haggling and paltering would do no good. He knew that even quiet, well-behaved citizens, when pushed too far, sometimes resorted to worse violence than he had yet suffered.

"All right," he growled, at last. "I'll go."

"I'll give two dollars," "I'll give a dollar," came from the bystanders. With teacher and parson contributing generously from their slender stipends, the full amount was raised in three minutes.

"Now, we'll put this money into somebody's hands," said Father, "and it'll be given you just as you're leaving. Whom shall it be?"

Pettitt named Titus, the sawmill man, and within three or four days, took his departure. He went to a hamlet just across the line in Morgan County, where he operated both a groggery and a ferry across White River. He drank more heavily after that and became more quarrelsome, sometimes getting into fights with those whom he was ferrying across the stream. But one day while half drunk, he picked a quarrel with the wrong man and was so beaten up that he died from the effect of the blows.

And as a result of the Miller-Kennedy purge, no liquor has been sold in Union Village, or Providence, as we call it now, from that day to this.

THE NATURE LOVER

.....

THAT drawing of a bird on the back of young Kennedy's school subscription paper was more significant than some may think. It hinted at an important facet of his character; for he was a devotee of Pan, a brother to all the wild things in nature; and I think many of them knew it. He was one of those favored persons who can handle bees or take honey from a hive without being stung, and he could break horses or mules without cruelty. During his first summer in Johnson County, a prosperous farmer for whom he worked had some young mules which he proposed to break to harness by the usual method, which involved much whipping.

"Don't do that," said young Kennedy. "I'll break them without trouble." The farmer selected one for him to experiment on, and said he'd hover just outside the pen and attempt a rescue if the animal got him down. But Father, following his usual method, put his right arm around the mule's neck and grasped its nose with his left hand, talking to it in a soothing tone meanwhile. After it had circled and capered a bit, it quieted and he got on its back, patting it and still speaking to it gently.

Within a short time, under his hypnotic influence, it became so docile that he could put a bridle on it.

"Don't whip it," said he to the farmer, "until it comes to understand what you want, and then only when discipline is absolutely necessary."

Notwithstanding the fact that eternal vigilance was required to raise and save the better part of a crop of corn, because there were so many creatures who insisted upon muscling in—beginning with wild turkeys, which scratched the seed out of the ground and crows which pulled up the young plant and ate the seed, and going on to other animals which harvested the crop—Father had little real resentment against them. His rural neighbors regarded crows, blackbirds, wild turkeys, wild geese, squirrels, rabbits, coons, ground hogs and a number of other fauna as man's natural enemies, to be destroyed by guns, dogs, poison, traps, any way available, and the more nearly by wholesale the better. But even after he had a farm of his own, Father admitted that he was not at all certain which of these should survive and which should perish. If a hawk or a fox took one of our young chickens, he would often say, "Oh, let 'em have it. They've got to live. We do the same thing, when it comes to that."

His coon hunting was done, not for the fun of killing the coon, but to be with his boys, to strengthen his fellowship with them, but most of all, I think, because he loved the forest, and felt himself more at home there than anywhere else. He disliked guns; he did not use one himself, and when I reached my teens and began to yearn for one because other boys had them, he evaded and postponed, hating to say, "No, you shan't have it,"

yet never letting me get possession of one until I reached manhood and was able to buy one for myself.

When he acquired his own home, it was always cluttered with pets—dogs, cats, chickens, squirrels, birds—never kept in a cage, sometimes a bit difficult to handle because of their natural irreconcilability with each other, and yet he generally controlled the situation fairly well. His yard was a feeding ground for birds and squirrels, especially in winter, while the trees were hung full of bird homes, some ingeniously contrived of wood, some just long-handled gourds with a hole cut in the side. He was one of the first in Indiana, I believe, to raise his voice in favor of conservation of our forests and natural resources, which others were squandering in a fashion which made the prodigal son seem like a miser. But no one comprehended him then.

In his latter years he wrote many articles on nature for newspapers and farm journals. He knew intimately the little folk of forest and field and the plants among which they lived, long before he ever saw a book on zoology or botany. He was one of the earliest rural teachers in the Western country, I think, to try to interest his pupils in those matters; doing it informally for many years, because they had no books from which to study the subjects. When the books came, he delighted in leading the children on field expeditions under more scientific guidance.

All this being true, it was quite natural that he should be sympathetic with the hobby of Bruce Boles, one of his early pupils in Johnson County, a nature lover who was particularly interested in reptiles and insects. If he had had the opportunity, if there had been more of a demand

for such knowledge then, young Boles might have become a great zoologist. He thought nothing of picking up lizards and snakes—if he could get his hands on them—from which other folk shrank in horror. Girls were sometimes a bit nervous in his presence, because he was apt to have a frog in his coat pocket or some spiders or bugs or tree toads in a little box.

One Sunday morning Bruce and his teacher were on their way to church together on foot. It was a cool day around the first of October, and when Bruce spied a garter snake about fifteen inches long, a bit sluggish from the chilly air, he had little trouble in capturing it. As he cupped it in his palm and let it crawl from one hand to the other, his teacher asked, "What are you going to do with it?"

"Oh, just carry it along," was all Bruce could think of.

"Not going to take it to church, are you," warned the teacher. "Church is no place for a snake."

"I'll put it in my coat pocket," explained Bruce.

"It'll get out. . . ."

"No, I'll pin the top of the pocket together. It'll stay there. It'll be glad to be in such a warm place."

Father still had misgivings as to the wisdom of the proceeding, but Bruce put little *Eutaenia sirtalis* into a side pocket, pinned the top of it together, and his mentor hoped for the best. The church was one of those built on an old-fashioned plan, with two doors in the end, hinting at the early obsession that men should sit on one side of the church and women on the other. The pulpit was between the doors, so that the audience, facing that way, could see everybody who came in without having to twist their necks. It was a great discourager of tardiness

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

save in cases where one had a brand-new outfit of Sunday clothes and not too great piety.

Bruce and the teacher took a seat well back toward the rear of the room. There was still such a scarcity of hymn-books in most rural churches then that the preacher "lined out" the hymns. That is, he would read the first two lines—

*How tedious and tasteless the hours
When Jesus no longer I see.*

Some full-voiced brother with a good ear for pitch would lead off, the rest would gradually fall in behind him, some never quite catching up, and they would sing those lines. Then the minister would recite another two—

*Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all lost their sweetness for me.*

And they would sing that.

During the song and the Scripture reading, Father now and then observed his companion out of the corner of his eye. There was a look of abstraction on Bruce's face, and presently it became evident that the hand on the other side of him was in his coat pocket. He had removed the pin and was fingering that snake.

"Let us pray," said Brother Todson.

Now, in those days, nobody sat bolt upright with eyes open during a prayer. Many knelt between the seats, and those who did not do this, bowed their brows in their hands or against the back of the seat in front of them, with eyes closed. Brother Todson's prayer was always

long and world-wide in its scope, and one might be sure of its continuing for ten or fifteen minutes.

On the side of Bruce adjoining the snake's lodging place sat a tall, lank fellow named Simon Core. As they bowed forward, Bruce—only in his latter teens and still very much of a boy—stole a glance at Simon and decided what to do with that snake. Turning his head slightly this way and that, he stole glances back over his shoulders. Everybody's head was decorously bowed; nobody was observing him. He took the reptile from his pocket and laid it lightly on Simon's shoulders. It was so small and light, a mere thread of a thing, that Simon evidently didn't feel it through his thick clothing. Bruce's idea was that it would crawl down Simon's back to the seat, maybe down his leg to the floor. He rather wanted to startle somebody a bit, though he had no intention of creating a disturbance.

But as Simon bowed forward, a wide space was left gaping between his lean, red neck and a too-commodious collar. The snake promptly peered over the edge of the collar, decided that here was a nice, warm hiding place from all these humans, and in two seconds the whiplike end of its tail flicked out of sight. At its very first touch, Simon's eyes flew open, his head lifted slightly and a look of strained attention froze his countenance, quickly changing to terror. He made a wild grab at the back of his coat, then leaped to his feet like a jack-in-the-box, and with a howl of "Ow! Ow! It's got me!" he lunged for the aisle, right over the heads and knees of his seat-mates, fell into it with a thunderous clatter, arose and ran for the door. Elder Todson halted his prayer, and, still on his knees, stared in amazement, while every head

in the congregation popped up, some members even rising to their feet. As Simon thudded down the aisle in his cowhide boots, wrenched open the door and slammed it after him, half a dozen men rose and followed him. Outside, they found him shucking his garments as rapidly as he could, half dancing, with little grunts and whimpers.

"What's the matter?" asked the amazed brethren.

"Snake or somep'n inside my clo'es," replied Simon. They were still inclined to think him raving until he took off something else—his shirt, I think—and the poor little snake fell to the ground.

Well, sir, talk about a nine days' wonder! That was more nearly a nine years' wonder. Nobody could figure out any way that seemed logical in which that snake could have insinuated itself into Simon's raiment without his discovering it. Oddly enough, nobody ever thought of connecting Bruce Boles with the incident. No one believed for a moment that the reptile had crawled in across the floor among all those feet, mounted the seat and climbed Simon's back. The only explanation that seemed feasible was that it had been in the loft and had fallen through a crevice in the planking—for there was no plastered ceiling. Even that was hard to swallow, for Simon swore that he hadn't felt it strike his back, and no one had ever heard of a garter snake climbing that high in a building; they are earthy creatures which almost never forsake the grass. For ten years and more thereafter, only two people knew the real inside story of that disrupted church meeting.

It wasn't at all an unheard-of thing for snakes to drop from the lofts of early rural country churches and school-houses. Once during my own teaching career, the

Reverend Robert Sellers was holding a series of revival meetings in my schoolhouse. The congregation was beginning to gather for one of the evening services, and perhaps twenty early arrivals, including the preacher and his wife, were standing about the stove or squeezed into near-by seats.

Suddenly a huge black snake which had apparently gone to the loft to pass the winter, partly thawed by the heat from below but still sluggish and clumsy, slid through an opening above and fell with a horrifying plop on the floor among the group around the stove. The screams of the women, the scrambling, the scuffling of the sitting ones in their efforts to pry themselves out of those cramped school seats—it was pandemonium! Most of the women and some of the men jumped up on the seats. Mrs. Sellers threw her arms around her husband's neck and begged, "Hold me up! Hold me up off the floor!"

"What will become of me?" demanded the parson, with grim humor. "I've got to preach to-night."

The snake had scarcely moved since it struck the floor, and about this time some man put his heavy boot on its head and ended its life; for we killed all snakes then, whether poisonous or useful. A man carried it out by the tail, and there were those present who swore that it was as long as he was. With true old-time versatility, the Reverend Sellers changed his subject for the evening to "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head"—see Genesis 3:15—and thereon preached a more or less impromptu sermon which fairly lifted 'em out of their seats.

Elder Todson's church was Separate Baptist in belief—I haven't time to explain all the delicate credal nuances

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

which distinguished the early breeds of Baptist, even if I knew what they were—and the Elder was only a lay preacher. So select was the congregation, so weak numerically in the county that the official pastor lived two or three counties distant and came to minister to the flock only once in three months. In between these quarterly meetings, Elder Todson would frequently supply the pulpit, and he had bought a ministerial black frock coat and trousers to wear on such occasions.

Once the Todsons invited my father to come over and spend the week end with them and attend church on Sunday to hear the Elder preach. They were good friends and keenly interested in the welfare of the school. Aunt Martha Todson—I must pause to explain to city folk that in the country in those days (and in certain remote districts the practice hasn't quite disappeared yet) when a man or woman reached and passed middle life, they began to be called Uncle and Aunt by neighbors who were younger than themselves, and later on, when they had grandchildren, some of them came to be known as Grandpa and Grandma. Well, as I started to say, Aunt Martha was a good cook and housekeeper, and the visit went on happily until church time Sunday morning. They were just clambering into the old "rockaway" to begin the drive to the meetin' house when Aunt Martha asked her husband for the second or third time, "Are you sure everything's been looked after?" She was always obsessed, upon leaving home, with a fear that something had been forgotten, as may very well happen on a farm.

"Everything," replied the Elder.

"All the stock fed?"

"Yes," he replied, adding virtuously, "Any Christian

should be thoughtful and kind to the dumb animals in his care."

"William," said his wife, fixing him with an accusing eye, "did you feed that calf?"

His face fell. "I declare to goodness," he confessed, "I'd forgotten that calf. It's one we're raising by hand on skim milk," he explained to the visitor, "and I haven't got used to rememberin' it yet."

"Let me go and feed it," exclaimed Father, leaping out of the vehicle. "You may get your clothes dirty." For there was the Elder in his broadcloth coat and breeches, polished boots, boiled shirt and black bow tie.

"No, I'll do it," said Mr. Todson, somberly, "as a penance for my thoughtlessness, my neglect of the welfare of one of God's creatures. It's my duty and I won't shirk it." But Father went with him as he strode to the barn, knowing that calves are usually a handful to manage. This one was imprisoned in a stall, and bawled hungrily as they approached with the milk. It had learned to drink from a pail, but was still amateurish at it, and its table manners were atrocious. As Mr. Todson carefully lowered the pail in front of the impatient youngster, it hooked its chin over the edge and forced it to the ground, spilling two-thirds of the milk, but getting its nose deep enough in the liquid to strangle itself—whereupon it threw up its head and coughed violently, spraying its master from head to foot with a milky shower. With milk dripping from clothing, face, eyes and hair, the incensed Elder seized the calf by the ears and jerked its head upward, growling through set teeth, "If it wa'n't for the grace of God in my heart, I'd shake hell out of you."

It was an awful moment. Here was a man of God, about to go into the pulpit and expound the gospel, seemingly posing as just a little higher in grace than his hearers, yet falling headlong into sin on the Sabbath, a-cursing like a very drab, a scullion. The Elder could find no words to fit the moment; he turned and stalked towards the house, a somewhat spattered picture of a soul in chaos. Father, who couldn't think of anything to say, either, followed with the now empty bucket, while the calf, which insisted on believing that it had somehow been cheated, bawled mournfully behind them. Aunt Martha, seeing from a distance that something was wrong, hurried to the rescue, found another shirt for her husband, and while she sponged the milk off his clothes, he washed it off his face and out of his hair, cleaned his boots and redressed.

Aunt Martha, of course, was told how it happened—but there was one thing that she wasn't told. Her spouse may have told her later—in fact, he would have had to tell her, to explain the curious thing he now said to the teacher, and which must have mystified her no little at the time, “Mr. Kennedy, this must be known only to us three.”

Well, at last the Elder was reconditioned, though still a bit dragged, and they hurried to church, where the congregation was wondering what on earth had happened to him; and there he went into the pulpit and preached a powerful sermon on the Tragedy of a Sinful Life. And again the teacher kept the secret, this time until after Elder Todson—which wasn't really his name—was dead.

YELLOW JACKET

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FIGHTING was one of the worst vices of pioneer youth. It was a natural outgrowth of frontier life, where one had to battle against nature and Indians and often other white men for the privilege of existing. Life was lived strenuously, and there were characters so roughened by a generation or two of this and of absence from the mellowing touch of urban society that a difference of opinion with them was apt to be just a word and a blow. The lie was seldom reached, like Touchstone's, in seven stages. Certainly there was no Quip Modest and no Lie Circumstantial; from a simple denial of statement, one progressed in about two jumps to the wallop in the eye. When fathers sometimes belabored each other, and an occasional teacher and father mixed it up, is it any wonder that the boys fought?

Some of the games of the period were of a rough-and-tumble sort, with elements in them suggestive of war. And when the bully, of whom there was at least one, usually two or more in every little school, ran up against one of the rules or differed with another in one of the fine points of the game or was hit a little too hard with the ball, he was apt to start something. Others more

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

equally matched frequently did the same. There was a bully or strong man in most pioneer neighborhoods, or at least close by, and he was of course an idol, a pattern for emulation for many of the boys, whose notions of high achievement tended rather towards the physical than the intellectual.

The church folk and most of the community took high ground on this subject, in strong opposition to turbulence, and the teachers labored to suppress it, but for two or three generations their efforts seemed to be futile. The usual procedure when a fight took place on the school ground was the larruping of both contestants by the teacher (if he was big enough to get away with it) even though one or both of them might, with their black eyes and bloody noses, seem to have suffered enough. The natural result was that there were hundreds of fights in the larger early-day schools of which the teacher never heard, if he was one who did not take part in the school-yard games—though the damaged faces of the warriors often gave them away.

At times, when the teacher was on the ground, perhaps taking part in a game of Bull Pen, and a row between two youths reached the point of blows, the teacher kept other boys away and let them fight it out, taking care to see that there was no biting or eye gouging.

Again, when there were two fellows who persistently quarreled and now and then came to blows, the master might say to them—as Grandfather Kennedy did in extreme cases—“Boys, this has got to be settled once and for all. The reputation of the school suffers when we have this continual brawling, and it must be ended. So now you may fight it out, and I’ll see that there is fair play.”

YELLOW JACKET

Sometimes they took him at his word and had a real slug-and-scuffle match. On other occasions, boys of a somewhat higher type of mentality struck by the essential silliness of the proposition reddened, shuffled, looked at the ground and stirred it with their boot toes, said, "Aw!" and in other ways exhibited the embarrassment of adolescence when confronted with its own absurdity. Thus the quarrel often evaporated for good.

As a hint at the strain of old medieval savagery which still persisted in the blood of some boys of seventy-five or a hundred years ago, they had a game which they called "Yellow Jacket." It was not a fight, but a contest in endurance, a formal duel, a descendant of the tournament and the swordplay of fifteenth century bravoos, jealous of their reputation as men of nerve and artistic killers. One boy, heaven knows why, would say to another, "Le's play Yellow Jacket." Then each would cut a switch for himself, short, but the keenest and toughest that he could readily find. Joining their left hands they would lash each other about the body and legs with the switch in their right hand until one or the other cried, "Enough!" There were some so stoical that blood would trickle before there was any weakening.

When strife between boys was obdurate and unpromising, the schoolmaster sometimes used this passage at arms as a means of ending it. Seats in the schoolroom would be moved back, the teacher would provide a bundle of switches, from which the contestants would each select one, and fall to, while the rest of the school looked on. If a switch broke or wore out during the battle, a halt was called and new ones chosen. Believe it or not, this rustic joust in many cases ended the bickering be-

tween the two; but the agonizing effect upon the more sensitive children, the brutalizing effect upon the others, far outweighed, I believe, any benefit that might arise from it. My father on rare occasions in his early career sponsored these duels, in which I think he erred gravely.

Even the girls in the old rural schools sometimes proved their mettle as fighters, though very rarely, for their behavior in general was more prim than is that of modern times. But I well remember how Minnie rose to an emergency in my own school days. Minnie and Tom were both orphans, being reared by uncles and aunts, and Minnie was a newcomer to the neighborhood. She was about sixteen at this time and he about seventeen. Tom had a streak of that sadism often found in the young male animal, which prompts him to tease and give pain to those weaker and smaller than himself, such as girls and younger boys, frequently picking some favorite butt for his torments and driving the victim almost to distraction.

Minnie, being a new pupil, became Tom's choicest target, his commonest mark of attention to her being to pull her hair with no gentle hand whenever he came within reach of her. She was a fine girl, too much of a sport to complain to the teacher or the home folks, and she bore his bullying with fortitude for several weeks. But about mid-term she confided to me—for she and I had been good friends ever since she came—that she was almost in the mood to quit school.

"Why don't you slap his face off?" I asked. "He wouldn't dare hit back."

The suggestion struck her favorably; in fact, I guessed that she had already pondered it. She was well-built and

well-muscled, and probably had been deterred from action only by the belief that ladies didn't fight.

"I believe I could whip him," she said slowly, after a moment's thought, ". . . and I think I will."

She didn't have to wait long. The very next day, as they rose to pass out at the noon hour, her tormentor, passing by, gave a sharp tug at one of her curls, saying, "Harya, Min!" He was passing on, all unsuspecting, when the cyclone struck him. Throwing her left arm around his neck and seizing his hair with her right hand, she jerked him backward between two seats, and pinned there with that strong left elbow hooked about his wind-pipe, she pummeled and whacked his face until he cried for mercy and promised never to touch her again. That act gave Minnie such a standing in the school as she could never have won by the finest of scholarship, the rarest goodness of character.

Tom died long ago, but I'll wager that Minnie, now a grandmother and perhaps a great-grandmother in one of our larger Indiana cities, has never forgotten one stroke of that memorable castigation which reformed a young sadist.

THE GENTLE BRUISER

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AND speaking of fighters, when Father, after a few years, took over a school a mile south of Union Village, he had gained such a reputation as a teacher that pupils aged from sixteen to twenty-five years came from adjoining districts to sit under his instruction, and the school became noted for the larger number of its advanced pupils. Among those from another district was a stalwart young man of twenty-four named John Halton, who hadn't been inside a schoolroom in five or six years.

Father felt much flattered at first by the compliment of John's reawakened interest in learning, but he presently discovered that it was not the superior advantages of his school which drew young Halton, but a deep interest which he had recently developed in a comely girl pupil seven years younger than himself—yet a woman grown, as pioneer girls usually were at that age. Father had known John well before he entered the school; and one evening at church in the autumn just before school opened, they were joking with each other over John's coming matriculation.

"It would be too bad if I had to lick you in school, John," Father remarked. This will be the more appre-

ciated when I explain that Halton was an amateur boxer who had already had several minor ring battles, and aspired to be a professional, and that he weighed 180 or more as against his teacher's 160 pounds.

"Yes, it would be too bad, Ben," John assented, with significant emphasis on the "too."

"You know, I lick 'em all, big and little, if they don't behave themselves," Father continued the challenge.

"So I've heard," was John's noncommittal reply, and no more was said at the time.

Halton was big in every respect but book knowledge, and would have learned rapidly if it hadn't been for Matilda, the object of his passion. He just couldn't keep his eyes or his mind off her. He had little opportunity to press his suit at recess or noon hour, for the sexes still didn't mingle much on the playground, girls still didn't take part—as they began to do twenty years later—in some of the boys' games, such as Dickey Pen; and hand holding or sparking would not have been tolerated on the school ground, even if the young folk of the day had had any inclination to do their love-making in public, which they hadn't. Furthermore, the young Hercules was so flabbergasted by Matilda's charms that he was shy in her presence, and could find little to say. He gazed at her—she sat across the aisle at his left—with a calflike idiocy of expression common among unsophisticated young lovers, a regard of which Matilda was well aware, and which pleased the coquette in her mightily.

Father remonstrated privately with the lovesick swain, tried to induce him to pull himself together and buckle down to his arithmetic, which was the study he needed most. "Matilda's only seventeen; she'll keep," was his

argument, as the big fellow sat with woebegone countenance, his huge hands lying loosely in his lap. "It's unfair to her to take her mind off her studies as you do."

"I know," John sighed ponderously, "but, oh, Ben, I love that girl!"

"I don't doubt it," admitted Father. "Anyone could tell that with one glance at you. But school isn't the time or the place to carry on that way. Her parents wouldn't like for you to interfere with her education the way you're doing."

"I jest cain't he'p it, Ben," was the mournful reply. "I love Matilda."

"You'll have to help it," said his teacher, firmly, "or I'll do something about it. Come! Brace up, get down to work, and I'll help your cause along now and then as well as I can outside of school hours."

John promised, and for three or four days really did try to keep his mind on his books—but the strain was too great. Halfway down a page or right in the midst of working a problem on his slate, his brain would refuse to stay on the job any longer. With one massive index finger pretending to keep his place on the page, his eyes would stray over his left shoulder, his face would take on that moon-struck mask, and there he would sit, perhaps with his jaw on his hand, staring at Matilda, lost in love's dreamland. She was always aware of these trances, and sometimes pretended to ignore them; though now and then she would fix his eye with her own, and with just the ghost of a faint, tantalizing little smile touching the corners of her lips, she would return gaze for gaze until the lover could endure it no longer; his face aflame, his eyes would fall away, and with a cavern-

THE GENTLE BRUISER

ous sigh, he would try confusedly to find his place again in his task.

Again and again Father remonstrated with him. "You're making a fool of yourself," said he, "and exposing the girl to ridicule. Furthermore, you're doing no good in your studies."

"If you was in my place, Ben," moaned the stricken one, "you'd understand. I love Matilda."



Again he would square his shoulders and try to concentrate; but in a little while his eyes would be straying again. His teacher's patience finally wore threadbare, and he resolved upon a drastic measure to bring John to his senses, if possible. One afternoon, when the lover was suffering from a serious attack, Father strolled to the rear of the room with a heavy switch under his arm, then advanced upon John from the rear. As he sat devouring his girl with his eyes, suddenly the switch fell upon his broad back, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven times.

Then without a word, Father walked up to his desk. John made no demonstration, and a deathlike stillness held the room.

Now that it was over, Father had a very queasy feeling. Had he lost John's friendship for life? The big fellow was gentle and forgiving, but perhaps this would be a thing that he could not forgive. It was only an hour until school was dismissed, and Father took pains not to mingle with the pupils as they departed. Gathering up his books and his lunch bucket, he hurried away alone. But two or three hundred yards down the road he happened to glance back at a thickety turn and saw that Halton was coming after him—for what purpose was highly conjectural.

Without looking back again, Father walked on as if oblivious of him. John strode fast and gained ground rapidly. What was he going to do—lick the teacher in return for his punishment in public? The latter's nerves were pretty tense as the other approached, but he gave no sign that he was aware of his pursuer. Reaching him, Halton, without a word, threw his arms around his teacher's waist and thighs, tossed him over his own shoulder like a bag of meal and started on in a dogtrot.

"Hey, what's this about?" asked Father.

John made no reply, but trotted on for fifty yards or more, doubtless salving his wounded spirit, proving that physically he was the better man, that he didn't have to take a licking from the teacher if he didn't want to. At last he set Father down and faced him, grinning.

"Ben Kennedy," said he, "you're the best teacher in Johnson County."

"How do you figure that out?" asked Father, an

enormous relief and joy pervading all his veins as John's good-humored countenance conveyed the news that they were still friends.

"Any teacher that goes easy on the little fellers," explained John, "and licks the biggest ones when they need it is a good teacher."

"I'm mighty glad you feel that way about it, John," said Father. "I did it for your own good, and it would have hurt me terribly if I had lost your friendship on account of it."

"I know all that, Ben," said the big fellow. "I still love Matilda, and I'm goin' to keep on lovin' her; but from now on, I'm goin' to try to look some other way in school and settle down to work. And if I don't . . . well, you jest do what you think's best."

"Well said, John!" exclaimed Father, shaking hands with him. "You're a real man, and worthy of Matilda or any other good woman."

That incident, instead of dividing the two men, cemented their friendship the more closely. They were like David and Jonathan for fifty years thereafter. Halton continued in school for two terms before enlisting with the Federal army at the beginning of the Civil War. Meanwhile, he and Father were often together at coon hunts, corn shuckings and other rustic merrymakings, as well as privately. One Sunday they were walking home from church service together, picking their way along the sod beside the road, which was inches deep in mud in some places. When they reached the crossroads where their ways parted, Father, who was boarding, said, "Come on home with me to dinner, John."

'No, you come home with me and spend the rest of the

day," invited John. It was an old contest in hospitality familiar in the country in the old days, often waged just to be polite, though in this case the disputants really meant it.

"Aw, come on!" urged John. "Just boardin' 'round like you are, you often get invited away to dinner, and the folks won't really be expectin' you."

And so they argued until at length Father said, "Tell you what le's do. Le's wrestle it out. We'll start here in the middle of the road, and if I can put you over against that fence, you go home with me. But if you can put me against the fence on this side, I'll go to dinner with you."

"All right," agreed John, his face lighting up in anticipation of the fun. The mud was deep in most places thereabouts, and there they were in their Sunday clothes—a typically nonsensical performance of two overgrown boys who wouldn't take a dare from each other.

Rolling their breeches up to the top of their high boots, they went at it. Just as they were about to come to grips, they caught sight of a carriage perhaps a hundred and fifty yards away—town folks, most likely—coming along the road.

"Maybe we'd better wait till that carriage passes," suggested Father.

"Won't need to," retorted John. "The wrastle'll be over before they get here."

"I doubt it," said Father, "but here goes."

For some moments they maneuvered for holds, and finally got down to hard work, staggering this way and that, into and out of pools of soupy mud, splashing it high on their clothes, but each considerably trying to avoid

throwing the other down, full-length in the muck—a forbearance which hampered Halton no little. He had the greater strength, but Father was agile and no weakling, either. While they were weaving back and forth across the middle of the road, the carriage reached the spot; the driver reined up and called out, “Hey, don’t you fellers know this is a public highway?”

Nothing but grunts answered his query, as the antagonists did their clownish waltz in the mud.

“Get outa the way!” roared the driver. “Ain’t you got any sense?”

“Plenty of it,” grunted Halton.

“Better be usin’ it then,” was the driver’s comment.

“Hold your horses, pardner,” John paused long enough to say. “This’ll be over in a minute.”

The driver continued to grumble, but the occupants of the carriage, with their heads poked out of the windows, seemed to be entertained by the scene. Presently John succeeded in getting the hold he wanted on his antagonist’s trousers, hoisted him in the air, carried him across the road and jammed him rather abruptly against the fence.

“All right, mister!” he called. “Thanks for waitin’.” The carriage moved on, with stares of wonderment from those inside as they passed the two panting, grinning young men. Those two, by the way, spent no small part of the afternoon at John’s home in cleaning their boots and scraping and brushing mud off their best clothes.

John had backers among the sports in Franklin, and after he came back from the war in 1865, his challenge to any man in Indiana to fight at \$500 a side was renewed. During the next several years he had a number

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY



of matches, and as I remember it, was almost never defeated. Between times, he worked on his farm, where he did his only training. Father was one of his seconds or towel holders in a bout which took place in Matt Hazlitt's livery stable—Matt, an Irish immigrant who began life as a hod carrier and built up a comfortable competence before he died—on the courthouse square in Franklin. Bare knuckles, of course—gloves had scarcely been heard of yet—and London prize-ring rules; every knockdown ended a round.

Father forgot the opponent's name in later years, and only remembered that he was a big Irishman who had quite a reputation in that part of the country as a boxer. But the affair didn't last long; just one round. They exchanged a few minor blows when Halton landed a jolt which rocked the fellow on his heels. That irritated him.

"Be gracious, look out for yerself," he warned, "for I'm comin' to kill!" He rushed and made a wild swing at Halton, leaving an opening wide enough to drive a team through. John didn't fail to take advantage of it—with an uppercut to the jaw of such sledge-hammer force that the Irishman only knew by the subsequent reports of his seconds what had happened. When they finally got him revived, he came to the conclusion that no one had ever hit him so hard before.

John was somewhere around forty when he ceased his occasional boxing. He was a successful farmer, a good business-man, a sterling and highly respected citizen. He produced quantities of live poultry—chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese—and sold them in Indianapolis; and when I was eighteen and twenty years old, I used to drive one of his wagonloads of the fowls up there on a

Saturday. We sold them mostly to German and Jewish neighborhood poultry stores, and at one German place which had a saloon in connection with it, John considered it good business to drink a glass of beer or two. I didn't drink, and always stood around, considerably ill at ease while John was so occupied. On one occasion there was a big Negro present, already with three or four drinks of hard liquor aboard, who invited everybody to have one on him. Seeing me standing dumbly in the background, he exhorted me, "Come on here, boy! I said ever'body."

"I'd rather not, thank you," I replied.

"When Ah treat, ever'body's gotta drink," he persisted.

"But I don't drink," I explained.

"When Ah asks anybody like a gempman to drink, dey drinks," said he, angrily, moving towards me.

"Let my young friend alone," interposed Halton, "He's got nothing against you. He just don't like liquor."

"Is you or ain't you?" persisted the fellow, still coming at me with fists clenched. I recoiled a bit, for he was bigger than I was, and murderous looking. Halton stepped in front of him.

"I told you to let the boy alone," said he. "He doesn't want to drink, and he isn't going to."

"Git outer de way, white man!" ordered the bully boy. Plainly, he had never heard of Halton and didn't dream that he was fooling with a buzz saw. He tried to brush John aside, but the latter shoved him back with a powerful one-arm thrust which should have been a warning to him. However, it merely switched his rage from me to the bigger man.

"Shove me around, will ya?" he yelled, rushing at John with an awkward swing. John blocked it neatly with his left, brought that deadly haymaker of his up from the knee to the jaw, and the Negro actually seemed to me to rise in the air as he went backward. He struck the floor with a thud that shook the building, and as Bret Harte says, "the subsequent proceedings interested him no more."

A few years later there was a man over toward White River who took no little pride in the slugging prowess of his son-in-law. He vaunted publicly that if ever this man should hit John Halton, John's wife herself wouldn't know him. This was bandied about for months, and John paid no attention to it, for he really was a peaceable fellow. At last one day both he and the son-in-law were in a group of men who were riding home from town on horseback. The bully, thinking that John was afraid of him, uttered crude innuendoes and banter until finally, John could endure it no longer. Both dismounted, tied their horses to a fence, and set to. Again it was a one-blow battle. John sparred for an opening, and when he got it, drove home. They had quite a time resuscitating the other fellow. But John dislocated the middle finger on his right hand with that blow and had a lump there for the rest of his life. It was his last fight.

John's wife? Oh, that was Matilda, of course. Yes, his unswerving devotion finally won her. She waited through the Civil War for him; they were married after the peace, and their life together was a long and happy one. Their seven children were all among my father's pupils at one time and another, and some of them overlapped into my regime. I taught a few of their grandchildren, too.

BARRING OUT

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ONCE a year there was a traditional, supreme test of artfulness, often of strength and endurance between teacher and male pupils. In most places, once during the term the master must be barred out of his school. In some parts of the country, I hear, this was just a stunt, with no particular significance, but in the Middle West, as in most regions, it came always to be connected with Christmas.

Just when and where and how the notion arose that the master must squander a part of his little stipend on a Christmas treat for his pupils, I do not know. But somewhere or other, one or more teachers must have balked at doing it, whence came the practice of taking possession of the schoolhouse and refusing to admit the teacher until he promised a treat. After a time the barring out came to be almost a fixed custom, because it afforded opportunity for a romp and a tussle of wits with the teacher. There is no doubt that much joy was taken out of the school term if he said quietly, "Yes, I'll treat." That wasn't what was wanted. Even if he made a practice of treating, the pretense was always assumed that he must be forced to do it; and he, for his part, if he enjoyed such

a contest, always refused to commit himself when youngsters began throwing out feelers two or three weeks before Christmas, some of them flatly asking him whether or not he was going to come across.

His reticence forced them to put the pressure on him. Through more than half of the nineteenth century this was done by seizing possession of the schoolhouse before dawn and keeping him out until he capitulated. Here again finespun pretenses of legality and ethics were involved. The assumption was that inside the schoolroom the teacher was the Law, and could not be subjected to compulsion. But catch him outside the building, and he became a mere layman, a mortal shorn of power, and could be forced. Later on, youngsters in some neighborhoods developed the more rowdyish idea of seizing the master's person if he was obdurate, and ducking him in some near-by water until he gave in—sometimes having to cut through thick ice to do it, too.

All this ado was made in the earlier years over a matter of a bushel of apples and a few pounds of candy. But perhaps I'm wrong there; the youngsters would have said that it wasn't the treat they fought for—it was the principle of the thing. I might say, by the way, that there were never more than two kinds of store candy seventy-five years ago. One was the striped-stick variety, the other a mixture of hard stuff made of sugar and chalk; and many country stores didn't carry either kind. Perhaps two or three gallons of cider might be added to the treat—and by Christmas some of it might be getting pretty hard. It is a deplorable fact that some graceless teachers of my grandfather's early experience actually gave their boy pupils liquor as a Christmas

setup and sent them home staggering and whooping. Peanuts began to appear in the rural Midwest in the fifties, and thereafter a bait of them might be a part of the treat; and later on, even one small orange to each pupil!—by which time the treat was considered to have reached the stage of magnificence. Most of our oranges then still came from Spain, I think, and yet, according to present-day standards of values, were not expensive.

Occasionally, when the boys had possession of the school building, they would specify what was to be included in the treat; which would most likely bring on an argument and a compromise. We Kennedys all went through these monkeyshines time and again. The larger pupils would coach certain of the little ones to begin sounding the teacher around the first of December, and his replies would be carefully pondered. If he proved obstinate or noncommittal, he might look for trouble just before Christmas day. There was one teacher of Father's acquaintance in Johnson County, who lived in a cabin only a few rods from the school and who found himself locked out and the larger boys in possession on the morning before Christmas; door and windows all tightly braced, of course.

The weather was very cold, and he decided to try freezing the boys out. He set a short ladder against the eave, and with his wife handing buckets up to him, he ascended to the chimney and began pouring water down it upon the schoolroom fire. The boys hastily raked the coals out upon the broad hearth and saved most of them. Then the master resorted to the smoke treatment; he brought planks and covered the top of the chimney—and anyone who has been in a room with an open fire and a

choked chimney knows that without ventilation, war gas has no greater terrors.

Well, the boys soon retorted to that by getting a pole or plank from the floor of the loft, shoving it up the broad chimney and knocking the cover off. Then the master sent his sturdy wife up to cover the chimney again and sit on the boards, while he hovered below, to fight his way into the building when the boys were smoked out. The boys' rejoinder to that was to use the pole as a battering ram. Three or four of the biggest of them stood in the fireplace and wielded it to such effect that at the second or third upward jolt, the matron lost her balance and came rolling down the roof, to land on the ground with a thud which ended her belief in that method of campaign.

By this time most of the girls and younger children had accumulated on the ground. The master sent them to his own home, with his wife to sit over them as schoolmistress, while he walked to and fro outside the building, holding the boys in siege. But as the hours wore on, one by one they had to yield to the demands of nature and come outside—for no matter how ruggedly they had been reared, their code of decency forbade their defiling the school building—and the master, who was a pretty husky chap himself, would capture them and bear them off to his cabin, where they admitted defeat and settled down to the status of disciplined pupils again—though the little shack was packed to suffocation, some sitting on the bed, most of them on the floor, some standing, and any such thing as study or teaching was out of the question. It was just a concentration camp.

By late afternoon the garrison was decimated and its resistance practically broken. Then the master laughed

uproariously and said, Of course he'd treat; he had intended doing so all along. He had enjoyed the war as much as the boys. The fact that he could fight so doggedly yet so genially, could beat them and then yield so gracefully, endeared him to them more than many another passage between them would have done. Long after events like this, teacher and pupils would recall and laugh together over incidents of the siege, even as old soldiers at their reunions remind each other of campaign incidents, serious or painful at the moment, but funny in retrospect.

A teacher who happened to be one of those seized and ducked two or three times in an icy stream or held there until he said, "Yes!" had to have a strong sense of humor or control of his temper, to endure it equably. Naturally, there were some who "couldn't take it," but I never heard of more than one who tried to strike back later. This one shouted as they dragged him towards the creek, "The law will take care of this!"

They broke the ice and forced his head and shoulders twice into the water before he yielded and promised the treat. But, seething with anger, he promptly went to town and swore out warrants against the parents of all the boys engaged in the affair. It was just a waste of time and money on his part. The judge, saturated with tradition, listened patiently to the arguments of counsel, but his mind had been made up as soon as he heard the evidence, and he unhesitatingly pronounced a verdict of not guilty.

"It appears from the evidence," said he, "that there was no malice, no intent to maltreat or injure on the part of the boys; nothing but the usual Christmas spirit of

fun. Mr. Clark," he turned to the plaintiff, "it is evident that you just can't take a joke. You ought to know the customs of the country. You refused to treat, and you might know what to expect. You said, 'The law will take care of this.' Well, it has, and I think in a just and equitable way. I would advise you to find another calling, better suited to your temper and limitations."

When Father was teaching in Union Township in the latter fifties, at the time when he had so many adult pupils on his roster, he was approached one December by a committee of little girls, evidently sent by the older pupils, to ask whether he was going to give a treat.

"Why, I might treat the younger scholars," he replied, as if the question were new to him, "but I would never think of treating grown men and women. They might not like it."

This was a new line of evasion, and when the little girls' report was made, it was taken seriously. Two or three days before Christmas, a ten-year old boy said to Father, "Teacher, are you goin' to treat?"

"I hardly think I will," replied Father with elaborate casualness, as if the matter had scarcely entered his mind.

"If you don't, the big boys'll lock you out," warned the youngster.

"Is that so?" said Father, still absently. "When?"

"Early in the mornin', before you git here," was the news.

Now, "early in the morning," in the vernacular, meant "early tomorrow morning." The little boy, as Father quickly guessed, was no emissary. He was just

gratifying his desire to gain the teacher's notice by tattling something which he had heard the big boys saying to each other. The threat immediately aroused the teacher's love of fun. That afternoon, when he went home to his boarding place, he told his hostess that he would not be there for breakfast, and asked her to make up a package of food sufficient for two meals.

About midnight he rose and dressed, took his double lunch and his books and hurried to the schoolhouse. There he started a nice fire going and sat down to await results. He had little expectation of any invasion before daybreak, but just wanted to be on the safe side. Along towards dawn, when the fire had burned down to a heap of glowing coals, he withdrew to the shadows in a corner of the room. Presently, sure enough, he heard voices, and in came six or seven of the older males. It was a schoolhouse, you see, which was seldom locked, because there was never anything left inside that was worth stealing.

Father had hidden himself under a seat in his dark corner. The boys poked up the fire, threw on more wood and sat down around it, talking of the impending crisis. Some of them rose to jam the windows tightly with billets of wood and bar the door. They tried to guess how the teacher would meet the challenge, tried to plan counter-strategy—a difficult thing to do, for as one of them remarked, Ben Kennedy was as tricky as the devil. At last, one of them, who had been a bit uneasy all along, said, "Boys, didn't it strike you when we came in that there was a lot of fire here and the room mighty warm for five or six o'clock in the morning? Maybe he's here already, hid up in the loft."

The suggestion struck them speechless for a moment. "That's so," finally admitted one. "He might be."

"Well, if he's here," remarked another, "he's heard aplenty about hisself and what we're goin' to do."

"When it gets a little lighter," said the first, "we better search the loft."

Father deemed the time ripe for his appearance. "Boys," said he, rising up in his corner, "I declare, I've never known scholars so punctual; never heard of boys so anxious to get at their books that they went to the schoolhouse before daylight. It certainly does make me mighty proud of you."

Some of them had started to their feet at the sound of his voice; all stood glum and speechless as he advanced towards the fire. He had no fear of attack, for he was within his schoolhouse, on his own sacred soil, and he knew they would not touch him there; it wasn't done.

"Let's sit down and talk this thing over," said he.

But they were in no mood for talk. Their coup had failed, and they were out of humor. Some one of them muttered that they might as well be gittin' home to breakfast. He tried to detain them, but they would not be detained. But as they shuffled out, he thought he saw something sinister in their eyes, in the glances they exchanged with each other, even in that remark that they were going home to breakfast. As they went out of the door, they muttered to each other, and watching from the windows as they moved away in the dim light, he saw that they had their heads together and were talking eagerly. He guessed that although momentarily checked, they were not going to admit defeat.

They didn't come back after breakfast; in fact, they

didn't even go home, but lay in wait in a thicket alongside the road to the teacher's boarding house, expecting to capture him when he went to his breakfast. Much to their surprise, he didn't pass by. They scouted a bit, thinking he might have gone another way, but found that he hadn't eaten breakfast at his boarding place. He, on the other hand, guessed what was up when they didn't come back to school. He ate not only his breakfast, but his noon lunch at his desk. They, finding that he did not pass at noon, finally gave it up and dispersed, but they waylaid the other pupils after school was out and laid plans for the night. This time they really circumvented the teacher; for when he appeared at school next morning, he found himself barred out, and with not only all the older pupils, male and female, inside, but many of the younger ones as well.

This time they seemed really to have gained control of the situation, but he refused to admit it. He held a parley with the garrison through a window and was told that the only thing left for him to do was to promise the treat. He was still obdurate. So were they; they told him they'd stay there until spring rather than yield the point. At last he said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. If any of you can catch me before noon, I'll stand treat tomorrow . . ." for the next day was Christmas.

The enemy held a conference on that proposition. "He's just trying to tole us away from the schoolhouse so he can make a roundance and come back here and get possession," was the opinion of the majority. They eventually decided to pick six of the fastest runners among the older boys and accept his challenge. While the six pursued him, the rest would hold the fort. They

announced this through the window to him, whereupon he prudently withdrew several yards—and it was well that he did, for almost immediately the half-dozen pursuers burst out of the building and took after him.

Father headed eastward along the main road toward Franklin, eight miles distant. Along the first mile or so of road, he was well known, and observers thought it was just Ben Kennedy and his boys playing another of those Fox and Hounds games, though it did seem a queer time of day to be at it; but maybe because it was Christmas Eve, as you might say, they had sort of knocked off for the holiday. But as they got farther along the road, they came into less familiar territory; as they overtook and passed jogging farm wagons and buggies or met others going westward, the drivers as well as people in farm-houses by the roadside stared in astonishment at the spectacle of a young man skimming along the road at nine or ten miles an hour, with half a dozen others pounding over the frozen earth from three hundred to eight hundred yards behind him. All parties involved seemed to be in good humor, however, and asked for no help, so nobody interfered, though several unanswered questions were shouted at the speeding contestants. There was no breath to waste on replies.

Mile after mile they reeled off. The boys had good staying powers, and as for their teacher, if he had been forty years younger when the Olympic Games began, I'd have backed him to hold his own with any of them in the 10,000 meters or the marathon. They ran the eight miles to the environs of Franklin in good time. Just outside of town, Father, though still good for many more miles, slowed up to a walk—he didn't want to lick them too

badly—and when the foremost of the boys caught up with him, he said, smiling, “You win.”

Teacher as well as pupils was red-faced and sweating as if in midsummer, and some of the boys were well-nigh winded, and wanted to sit down.

“We’ll wait till the rest catch up with us,” said Father, “and then go on into town.”

“Into town? What for?” gasped one.

“Why, to buy the treat, of course,” said Father. “And you all can help me carry it back home.”

If they hadn’t gotten two lifts of a couple of miles each from farm wagons on the way back, they would have been pretty well frazzled out, what with carrying all those groceries. That was the first but not the last time that Ben Kennedy outran his pupils in the argument over the Christmas treat.

MANDY'S DEMONSTRATION

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IN 1859 Father took over District School No. 3 in Hensley Township, next south of Union; and when he looked about him there, he knew that he had found the place which he wanted to call home.

Hensley is in the southwest corner of Johnson County, bordering on Brown County, which in times past was often spoken of as the Switzerland of Indiana. There is one mighty elevation there, Weed Patch Hill, the Everest of Indiana, which rises to a height of 1,186 feet above sea level! Not until well into the twentieth century did a railroad touch Brown County; and around the turn of the century, when Booth Tarkington was beginning his career with *The Gentleman from Indiana*, when James Whitcomb Riley and Lew Wallace and Charles Major and Meredith Nicholson and George Ade and others had made Indiana the leading book-producing area of the country, when Indianapolis was modestly referring to itself as the New Athens of America, Brown County citizens were regarded by these cultured folk as being in the same category with the most backward of the Southern Appalachian mountaineers.

The county was a favorite joke in bookish Franklin.

Kin Hubbard's famous character, Abe Martin—whose homely sayings caused even some British literary pundits to declare Kin the leading American humorist of his day—was supposed to be a Brown County hillside farmer. But I do know that Sassafras George, that quaint character who used to come up from the edge of Brown every spring, even long after 1900, with bundles of the root which gave him his nickname, had customers in Franklin who made tea of his product, to take the winter humors out of their blood; yes, and some in Indianapolis, too.

Hensley Township is a region of pleasant little hills and vales, becoming more rugged as it approaches the border of Brown County. And there, within a few rods of his school, No. 3, Father and Grandfather together bought eighty acres of land in 1860 (more was added later), for Grandfather had decided to come down from Putnam, where he was still teaching, and end his days in a terrain which, from Ben's description, seemed to resemble his and Martha's native Bourbon County. There were at least 600 fine hard maple trees of sap-yielding size on their new possession, and there in after years many a school frolic was staged at sugaring-off time in March. There were also many black walnut trees—as the farm stands now, about 500 in full bearing. The farm has just rounded out eighty years in Kennedy possession; I was born on it, have lived all my life on it, and shall probably die on it.

Father was now approaching a great turning point in his life—the time when he at last fell heels over head in love and took to himself a wife. His choice was a pretty schoolgirl in her middle teens, Delilah Caroline Davenport, a bright, vivacious pupil in his own school. Folks

used to tease them afterwards with the story that he once made her stand on the rostrum for whispering. They both refused to talk for publication on the subject—would neither affirm nor deny it, so it was probably true. She was thirteen years younger than he, and curiously enough, she lived thirteen years longer.

An early incident in their friendship, and a rather spectacular one, was his falling gravely ill at her home. Just after ending his three months' school term in mid-winter, he went up to Putnam County to visit his parents, and on his way back, missed his connection at Indianapolis. There was not another train until next day; and impatient at the delay, he decided, as it was fine, dry, frosty weather, to walk to his boarding place, a distance of about twenty-nine miles. He was feeling a bit queer and feverish, but didn't know that he was in the first stages of measles; he thought it was just a little cold, and he could walk it off.

He wrapped his little woolen shawl about his neck and shoulders—few countrymen had overcoats then—and late in the afternoon he set forth. He went down the old Indian trail or Three-notch Road, and walked all night, more and more slowly, feeling queerer all the time. Early in the morning he stopped at the Davenport home, thinking that a bit of breakfast and a cup of coffee might set him up. But the family quickly saw that he was too ill to go further; in fact, in a little while, he lost consciousness. They put him to bed, and all that day and the following night they worked over him with such homely rustic remedies and expedients as they knew. Next morning he seemed so gravely ill that Mr. Davenport mounted his horse and hurried off to Morgantown for a doctor.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

It was several hours before the physician arrived—an interesting character whom I shall call Dr. Meddick; profane as Blackbeard, violent in his expressions, but a good fellow at heart and a sterling citizen. When he had examined the patient and heard the story of his walk, he was plumb disgusted.

“Who is this young man, anyhow?” he asked.

The told him; schoolteacher . . . came here from Putnam about three years ago . . . been back there on a visit . . .

“I knew he didn’t belong around here,” said the doctor. “We don’t raise such damn fools in this neck of the woods. The idea of tryin’ to walk thirty miles in winter with a high fever! I never heard of such a thing.”

“Do you think he’ll get along all right?” asked Mrs. Davenport, anxiously.

“Hell, no!” said the genial doctor. “I think he’s goin’ to die.”

Father, who had been coming slowly out of his coma for some time past, had heard most of this colloquy. He turned his head slightly, his eyelids rose a little and he said, “Doc, you’re a damn liar; I’m getting well.”

The doctor shouted with laughter. “Well, I’ll change my mind,” said he. “I see you’ve got something left yet. I think you’ll be all right, with these good folks to take care of you.” His patient was “breaking out” nicely at that moment, and in two or three days he was much better. The physician did not call again, but he and Father became good friends; and in later years, when Father taught school in Morgantown, Dr. Meddick’s children were among his pupils.

That profane episode might have been a disastrous

beginning to a courtship in some households, but it didn't ostracize the teacher from the Davenports. Incidentally, that was the only time in Benjamin Kennedy's life—until within a few days of his death at eighty-four—when a physician was called to attend him, and the only time after childhood that he was bedfast until he lay down on his bed for the last time. And I might add that he never had a tooth pulled, and said that he had never known toothache.

In the winter following his purchase of the land, his father was not yet ready to move, so Father rented the maple orchard to a neighbor, John Van. That winter a young fellow of twenty named Bill Weldon wandered up from East Tennessee and found a job with Father, clearing and working on the remainder of the farm, though he had nothing to do with the sugar camp. Bill came north largely because he just wasn't interested in the Civil War, then beginning, especially the Confederate side of it, and preferred to let others attend to the fighting. He had never eaten any maple sugar, and greatly longed to taste that delicacy, but Van was inordinately stingy with it, and wouldn't even sell a bit of it to him.

"I got a contract to sell three hundred pounds," he explained, "and it's goin' to crowd me to fill it. I'm payin' a cash rent here, and I can't afford to dribble out my sugar to Tom, Dick and Harry and not fill my contract."

Bill accepted the rebuff meekly, but his wistful, "I shore would like to taste that there sugar," touched Father's heart. "I'll see John and try to get some for you," he promised. But even he was unsuccessful. "I cain't spare it," said John. "Why, Ben, I wouldn't even

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

sell my own daddy a pound of sugar right now, with things like they are."

Father thought he exaggerated the situation, but said no more. Two or three days passed, and coming home from school one evening in a mood for adventure, he said to Weldon, who was living in the cabin on the farm, "Bill, would you still like to have some maple sugar?"

"Yes, sir," said Bill.

"Well, we'll step over to Van's house tonight and get some," remarked Father, casually.

"'Tain't no use, Mr. Kennedy," Bill reminded him. "He won't let you have none."

"We'll see," was the cryptic rejoinder. After supper they sat talking for an hour or more, and then Father read a while, until Bill began to nod. He was too meek to ask whether the sugar errand had been given up, but finally decided that it had, and said, "Well, I reckon I'll go to bed."

"Oh, no, not now," said Father, laying down his book. "We've got to go after that sugar."

"At this time o' night?" Bill's eyes were round with amazement.

"Certainly."

"They'll be gone to bed."

"We'll see," Father replied. "Come on."

They took their hats and set forth. The early spring night was partly cloudy, moonless and dark. Van lived not far away, in a cabin closely surrounded by trees. Not a spark of light showed as they approached it; of course John and Hannah had been in bed and asleep for a couple of hours. Fortunately they had no dog; a fact which Father had taken into consideration.

MANDY'S DEMONSTRATION

When they were within a hundred yards of the house, Bill, completely mystified by the whole proceeding, asked, "Are you goin' to wake these folks up?"

"We'd better stop here and decide on that," said Father. "What do you think, Bill?"

"I think I druther be home in bed," admitted Bill, frankly.

"What! With no sugar?"

"Yes, sir, without no sugar."

"Well, we're going to get that sugar for you," said Father. "I'll go up to the door and pull the string, and if the latch doesn't click and wake them up, I'll open the door. If it doesn't creak, we are all right. John keeps his sugar in a big box under their bed, and all you've got to do is to crawl under there and get you a cake."

"Mr. Kennedy," said Bill, earnestly, "I wouldn't go in that there house for all the sugar in the world. I don't want it that bad. Mr. Van might shoot me . . ."

"He has no pistol," soothed Father. "I know that for a fact; nothing but a rifle, and that's hanging on the wall, unloaded."

"And besides, Mr. Kennedy," the humble fellow went on, "I ain't never stole nothin' yit, and I ain't aimin' to begin now."

"All right, I'll do it then," said Father. "I'll leave my boots with you; and remember, if you have to run, *don't leave 'em behind!*"

"Y-yes, sir," stammered Bill, whose teeth were actually chattering by this time, and who was evidently at a total loss to understand the situation. Here was the teacher, whom he had supposed a man of the highest integrity, actually burglarizing a neighbor's house, and all for a

cake of maple sugar. It was inexplicable, a moral cataclysm!

But there was no breaking and entering, for of course the door wasn't locked; Indiana had reached that Elysian age, which continued for decades longer, when countryfolk seldom thought of locking their home doors at night. Father opened the door, pulling the latchstring just as one of John's ripping, rending snores drowned all other sounds, swung it open at another snore, crept in, reached under the bed, got a two-pound cake of sugar and buttoned it inside his shirt. And by this time a new bit of devilry had occurred to him.

Knowing that John was no lion for courage, he decided to give him a scare. The primitive cord bed, too, with its mattress and sleepers supported only by a web of rope, was an incitation to his mischievous spirit. He crawled under it, and began humping his back against it, scratching the floor with his nails and growling in a fair imitation of a big dog.

Hannah awoke first and lay for a few moments, frozen with terror. The unseen marauder would pause momentarily, then shoulder the bed again and growl. Hannah could stand it no longer. Seizing her husband's arm, she exclaimed in a muted tone in his ear, "John! John! Wake up!"

John's snores ceased, he stirred slightly and mumbled, "Huh? Waz matter, Hanner?"

"There's a big dog got into the house," she told him. "Under the bed! Listen! Get up and drive it out."

John listened and believed; but he made no move to rise.

"Why don't you get up and do something?" Hannah's

voice rose shrilly, frightening Bill Weldon outside into still worse trembles. "Are you goin' to lay there and let me be et up by a vicious animal?"

Father's demonstration had been mostly under her side of the bed, but now he moved toward the outer side, directly under the man of the house and staged another growl.

"I ain't goin' to get up in the dark," said John, hastily shifting his weight closer against Hannah, "and be tore to ribbons by no damned dog . . . or maybe a bear. More likely it's a bear." He had thought of the bear to make the danger appear greater, but he had no sooner voiced the thought than he began to believe it himself. It had been a long time since the last bear was killed in the vicinity, but—as in all rural neighborhoods then—bears were still being "seen" at night by those who happened to be abroad.

"And it's under there," wailed Hannah, "a-eatin' all our sugar. You cowardly skunk, if you had half the makin's of a man, you'd do somep'n! The Lord ha' mercy on me, if I'd knowed I was marryin' a man without no more backbone than a louse, I'd 'a' shot myself before the weddin'." She continued to rage as John hunkered against her and Father crept hastily out of the door, leaving it open. He found Bill standing guard with his boots, but more scared than was John Van. He said it seemed hours to him since Mr. Kennedy went into that house.

"I'm going to pay Van for the sugar, Bill," Father explained on the way home, "so you can eat it with a good conscience. I just wanted to have some fun. But you mustn't ever tell anybody about this."

"I shore won't, Mr. Kennedy," promised John, fervently.

Some time afterward, Father met Van one day and said, "John, here's a half dollar for a couple of pounds of maple sugar I got from you."

John stared. "When did you ever get any sugar from me?"

"About ten o'clock one night several weeks ago," said Father, his eyes twinkling. "The night a big dog—or was it a bear?—got under your bed. It couldn't have been a bear, because it didn't eat the box of sugar."

John's face was poppy-red; for a few moments he was speechless. "Have you told anybody about this, Ben?" he asked.

"No."

"Well, if you'll keep it to yourself forever, you kin have the fifty cents and welcome. I wouldn't have Hanner know about it for a million dollars."

Bill Weldon was destined to have another shocking adventure in Indiana. He began casting sheep's eyes at a husky miss of sixteen in the district named Mandy Bauerle. Mandy's parents were immigrants from Pennsylvania; rough, coarse-grained, hardheaded as granite. There was to be a dance at a neighbor's home in the spring, and Father was going with his fiancée, Caroline Davenport. Bill asked Mandy if he might escort her, and she admitted her willingness, but there was a slight hint of uncertainty in her manner. She said she had been to play-parties, but she hadn't attended an out-and-out dance yet, because her parents had maintained that she wasn't old enough. But now that she was sixteen, she was of opinion that the time was ripe for her

MANDY'S DEMONSTRATION

debut, and she didn't think she'd have any trouble in making it.

But that was just wishful thinking; she still refused to believe seriously enough in the obstinacy of Ma Bauerle. However, Bill thought it was all settled. Folks who were going to a dance in those days always had supper early, for the party was apt to begin by seven o'clock. Father and Mother agreed to accompany Bill and give him moral support. When they arrived at the Bauerle home, it was easy to see that Mandy had been having her troubles. The fact of the dance hadn't hastened the family's supper; the milking had just been done and the milk crocks set in a row on a shelf between the posts on the back porch. Mandy's face was stormy and her eyes red-rimmed. She seated the guests and stepped through the door to the back porch, where she had been helping with the milk. She left the door open, so that the callers saw and heard most of what came next.

"For the last time," she demanded, "are you goin' to let me go to that dance? My company's here, and Professor Kennedy and Carrie are with him."

"I've told you a hundred times," grated the rough voice of her mother, "that you can't go to no dance until you're old enough to behave yourself. So now jest make up your mind to set right down here at home."

At that, Mandy's patience reached the breaking point. "All right then," she exclaimed, her voice rising shrilly. "If I can't go to the dance, I'm a-goin' to demonstrate a great truth. Everything that goes up has got to come down, by force of gravity," and she seized one of the crocks of milk and threw it up in the air. Before the horri-

fied eyes of mother and guests, it crashed on the broad stone step outside the porch.

"Professor Kennedy says so," she gabbled. "He threw a ball up to the schoolhouse ceiling, and it come down and hit the floor, and he says, 'That's gravity,' " and up went another crock and smashed on the edge of the porch, while milk flew in all directions. "'Force of gravity,' " he says!" Another crock. "'Specific gravity!'" Another. Her mother was shrieking, "You, Mandy, stop that! I'll wear you out!" Her father had heard the din and was shuffling towards the scene—old but still powerful. "What the hell's goin' on here?" he demanded.

"I'm a-demonstratin' gravity!" yelled Mandy as she hurled another crock upward, while her mother explained, "This youngest darter of yourn is throwin' away all the evenin' milk."

"All that goes up's got to come down, accordin' to gravity," chanted Mandy, as she tossed the last crock in the air.

"'Od durn ye, I'll show ye how to come down 'ithout goin' up," bellowed the old man, drawing back his massive arm, to cuff her into the middle of next week. Fortunately, her mother, a little better balanced, seized the arm and hindered it momentarily, while Mandy skipped out of reach.

Well, she didn't go to the party. The three guests never knew what happened to her after they departed, but they presently stole away from the distracted family without ceremony, Weldon pale and almost on tiptoe. He never sought Mandy's company again; and somehow, the others who did by way of experiment, didn't persevere long. Poor Mandy! She was evidently born under the

MANDY'S DEMONSTRATION

wrong sign; the stars were against her from the first. Twenty years later, when she was an old maid by the standards of the time, Jake Maggard showed signs of courting her, but his father put a quietus on the affair.

"You stay away from that woman," he ordered. "She's a reg'lar devil, and I won't have her in the family. If you want any of my money, you'll jest quit cuttin' your eye at her right now." And Jake did as he was bid.

But no sooner did old man Maggard's wife die, three or four years later, than he had a new broadcloth suit made for himself, began sitting up to Mandy—it didn't take long—and married her. She gave him several children as the years went on, but they led a cat-and-dog life.

THE CRISIS

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I'VE been expecting it for twenty years," said Grandfather in the spring of 1861, when Sumter was fired on. "The whole question of slavery has been handled wrong."

Although a Democrat, he was a Jacksonian Democrat in his insistence that "The Union must and shall be preserved." He was a bitter opponent of slavery and of secession. But . . . "Compensated emancipation would be the solution," he told his neighbors in Putnam County. "Turn the slaves loose, but pay their owners for them out of the government treasury. It would be far less costly than a war, and the South would, in turn, help to replace the money with taxes. If we ruin the South, we set the whole nation back."

But though few of his neighbors could see eye to eye with him, no one could impugn his loyalty; for with his entire consent, three of his family—Thomas, donning the colors for the second time, Henry, the youngest son, and the son-in-law—enlisted in the Union army and fought in the great battles in Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia and the Carolinas. Robert, the second son, remained

at his cabinetmaking in Putnam and Father at his teaching.

Ben Kennedy was too good-natured to engage in a war or even oppose secession. There was no place in his heart for hatred. His feeling was precisely that of Horace Greeley's first reaction towards the seceding states: "Let the erring sisters go." Politics meant little to him, but he had a notion that there was a certain wisdom in the South's stand for states' rights; and how many Northerners there are today who wish that the principle had not been so completely rejected! Father had a secret sympathy for the Southerner, especially for the thousands of poor fellows who owned no slaves, but would have to march away and perhaps give up their lives for the Cause, whatever it was, leaving impoverished families at home.

Schools were depleted, in our township as everywhere. Not only the young men in their twenties, but boys of eighteen, seventeen, sixteen—yes, an occasional one even younger—laid down their books and shouldered muskets; and at the outset, a few youngsters of twelve and thereabouts, horribly enough, found places as drummer boys. Away went John Halton—leaving Matilda, now his betrothed, weeping behind—and others of Father's closest friends. Schoolrooms now presented an oddly unbalanced picture; only young boys, but girls all the way up to womanhood.

There was sadness, not only over brothers and over former pupils in Johnson County, but over the news from Putnam, whence word came that So-and-so and So-and-so and So-and-so, former playmates and friends, were marching southward. Sometimes, as he stared through the schoolroom window at the naked boughs tossing

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

under a gray sky and thought of the boys fighting down there in the bitter cold along Stone River, Ben Kennedy wondered whether there was anything of the craven in his . . . but no! Somebody had to stay at home—to produce food, and teach the young and carry on the nation's business; and it would better be those who hated war—who found no thrill in its excitement and pageantry.

Even some heads of families felt the urge to go and help save the Union, and the teacher became frequently an adviser for the worried wife and mother left behind; at times even had to help her find sustenance. Some of the teachers went to war, too; and what with all this depletion, the tying up of school funds by court actions which were still dragging along and the diversion of state moneys to war purposes, the schools reached a lower ebb than they had known in ten years or more. But women began stepping in rapidly increasing numbers into the jobs left vacant by the men who had exchanged the switch for the musket, and obtained a hold which was never shaken; thereafter the public-school teaching profession became more and more predominantly feminine.

And what happened at little Franklin College was more or less typical. Every student there enlisted save two who were lame, dealing the institution such a blow that it was closed, not only during the war, but for several years thereafter.

And of course the inevitable second act of the drama began within a few months after the first; news from the front that Jim had fallen at Mill Spring and Bob at Fort Donelson and Brad at Shiloh; and later, as armies and battles grew greater, the dread news came so rapidly and

often that souls grew numb under the shocks, and another friend dead did not seem so terrible as it once had.

In 1861, the year after he and Father had bought the land in Hensley Township, Grandfather came down to live on the new property, and in the winter of 1861-1862 he taught one term of school in the neighborhood—his last. His hearing was failing a little, and it seemed best for him thereafter to be the master-mind on the farm and let his son do the teaching. And it was in 1862 that Father and Caroline Davenport were quietly married, beginning a happy union which endured long past the golden wedding day.

The great number of Southerners in the border states north of the Ohio, especially in their southern halves, brought on an ugly situation. They were nearly all Democrats and mostly opposed to the war. It is difficult to understand now that there were thousands of northern Democrats who saw Lincoln during his presidency with the same prejudiced eye with which Republicans saw Cleveland and Wilson in later years, who honestly regarded the war as largely a political enterprise of the Republican party; and yet many, feeling just that way, fought in the Federal army, gave their sons to it or aided in some other manner.

Naturally, the border-state ex-Southerners of the first or second generation—many of whom had kinsmen fighting in the Confederate army or saw their homes and acres devastated—could not feel enthusiastic about the war as its slaughter grew greater and as the national debt went leaping upward; and what a wholesome horror of national debt our people had then!—and as they saw hundreds of innocent men and useful citizens being

arrested and jailed in the North—some to lie in prison for months and years, some to die there—on suspicion, merely because they were Democrats.

Many hearts were torn by divided loyalties. Many of these former Southrons, as I have said, had sons or other kinsmen in the Union army, too; for the younger generation, who had known only the country where they grew up, felt little or none of that pull towards the South which now made the fathers and mothers so unhappy; and they, with the insouciance of youth, enlisted under the nearest flag for the great adventure.

Of course, the middle-aged and elderly among these folk would have been glad to see the war halted and the quarrel settled, little matter upon what basis, if only by peaceful means. So when an organization appeared, undertaking to do just that, many of them willingly joined it. It was whispered to my father that a secret order with this laudable object, known as the Knights of the Golden Circle, of course almost entirely Democratic in its membership, was about to place a unit in Hensley Township, and would he join? Without a second thought the ardent pacifist said, Of course he would—and was made recording secretary. Johnson County was then and for decades after the war predominantly Democratic in politics, and there were other units or "castles," as they called them, within its borders.

There is no doubt that the object of the more radical members of this order, including certain of its leaders, was treasonable. These extremists contemplated violence—the seizure of Northern military prisons, release and arming of the Confederate prisoners, even the overthrow of the Federal government. But Benjamin Kennedy and

most others among the milder ones had no such thought, and some members never even heard of these wild schemes.

It was the radical element which ordered military drill for the members—a fact which disturbed Father when he heard of it, thought it was reassuring to find that it was done without guns. The “castle” of about a hundred members in our neighborhood—which drew strength from neighboring townships and even a little from the edge of Morgan County, to westward of us—drilled for a time in a little glade on our farm, where I now live. Grandfather strongly disapproved of the whole business, and he and Father had many arguments about it, though no bitterness over the matter seemed to remain between them afterward. Here, as elsewhere, nearly every member had at least one near kinsman in the Union army. John Hoagland, the head of the castle—“Grand Seigneur” was his title—had two sons wearing the blue.

The meetings of the organization were held at night, often in barns, sometimes in summer, in well-guarded spots in the woods. There was a deal of mummery about the initiation and other ceremonies, and elaborate methods of ascertaining whether a stranger was a member, first by positions of the hands and feet, and then by a series of secret phrases. They had a weird cry, “Oakhou-u-un,” which was supposed to be a distress signal, but which they took to using rather promiscuously at night—a Tom-Sawyerish bit of adolescence which, however, sent a shiver through many a woman alone by her fireside and down the back of many a nonmember when it was heard faintly on the night breeze.

An old friend of mine told me that he and his brother—

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

they were then about ten and twelve years of age, respectively—noticed that their father was frequently absent from home in the evening, and with the insatiable curiosity of boys, they finally slipped from a bedroom window and tracked him to a big log barn a mile away; it was near Edinburg, in our county. They crept as close as they dared and watched many more men come—there must have been fifty in all, they guessed—all being challenged by a sentry outside and compelled to give passwords and countersigns in a low tone.

By the dim light of some old colonial tin lanterns, the meeting powwowed, so it seemed to the boys, for hours. It grew to be a bore to the young spies, who couldn't hear anything but a murmur, and reflecting that they should be at home ahead of their father, lest he should discover their absence, they finally began to back away. But in doing so, one stumbled and made a noise among some bushes. The sentinel fired his gun, right over their heads, as they verily believed, the lights were doused in the barn and a stealthy exodus began. The boys ran for dear life and succeeded in reaching home and crawling into bed ahead of Pa, but it was a close call. Two weeks later, Governor Morton somehow got a tip as to this "castle," and sent two wagonloads of soldiers to surround the barn on the regular meeting night; but the knights in turn had been warned, and when the soldiers moved in, they found the barn empty.

It was inevitable that knowledge of the existence of such an organization should quickly leak out, and that everybody known to be connected with it should be suspected by the Republicans of treasonous designs. One of the contemptuous terms applied to them was "Butter-

nuts," the same nickname given Confederate soldiers because many of their uniforms were dyed with the juice of the butternut or white walnut—you must be a Mississippi Valleyan, I think, to be familiar with that tree. In strongly Democratic districts, as in parts of southern Indiana, the more radical and bellicose members retorted to this gibe by flaunting a half of a butternut shell as a badge on coat lapels and women's dresses.

There was comparatively little dissension aroused in our township by the presence of this organization; which was chiefly due, I suppose, to the fact that most of the men belonged to it. Father said that his membership in it, if known to nonmembers, seemed to make little difference in their attitude towards him. The ones who resented these more or less subversive organizations most were the soldiers. Some of the sons and brothers of Knights expressed their opinions in no uncertain way to their kinsmen in letters and in person when on furlough; acrid family quarrels arose over the subject.

On one occasion some twenty-five or thirty of the Hensley Township Knights, Father among the rest, went over into Brown County to join in a meeting. Brown had some pretty radical members; one of them, named Prosser, a short time before this had wounded a soldier at a patriotic meeting where a Captain Cuning of the army was making a speech, whereupon Cuning drew his pistol and killed Prosser. Brown County was in bad repute with patriots; it was said to be a nest of Copperheads.

The meeting was held in the evening, and the party of Hensley men attracted no little attention as they rode horseback through Morgantown just after dusk. Nearly everybody in the group was armed; it became a habit to

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

"tote hardware" during the war. Some thirty or forty soldiers from Morgantown and the neighborhood, at home on furlough, were gathered in the town that evening, and their indignation rose when the party rode through and they learned, more by surmise than by any other means, what it was. They watched for its return, resolved to do something, they didn't know what; meanwhile, making their headquarters at a saloon.

About one in the morning, when the whole town, save that bar, was asleep, the troop came riding back. Suddenly the horsemen saw a group of men rush into the street in front of them—in blue uniforms, as they could see by the light streaming from the saloon door—and there was a cry of "Halt!"

The riders drew rein; they could see a cavalry pistol being flourished here and there. A spokesman stepped from among the soldiers and said, "Advance and give the countersign."

John Hoagland, head of the castle, who was among those riding in front, demanded in turn, "What does all this mean?"

At that, a voice from among the soldiers shouted, "Where have you God damned traitors been?" and "What you been doin'?" added another voice.

Hoagland was more noted for courage and a quick temper than for discretion. At this insult, he snatched forth his pistol and yelled, "Ride 'em down, men!"

In another moment, the Battle of Morgantown might have become a minor but bloody episode of Civil War history. But Father, who had been riding close beside Mr. Hoagland, spurred his horse in front of the latter's and cried, "Stop!" Among those soldiers facing him were

former pupils and neighbors; among the horsemen behind him were more of the same, including some whose children were now under his teaching.

"Let's think about this thing a minute," he pleaded, as the soldiers, some of them more than half drunk, blared epithets and accusations. "It wouldn't do any good for us to start shooting each other. We aren't traitors, boys. We're loyal Americans, just as you are." (He might have been a bit too complimentary to two or three of the party behind him, but he was a special pleader now, trying to avert bloodshed.)

"Some of you men have known me for years," he went on. "You ought to know that I'm not a traitor."

"What are you runnin' around with Copperheads for, then?" came out of the babble. ". . . Damned rebels!" ". . . Never expected to see Ben Kennedy in such. . . ."

"Some of you know," Father broke into the uproar, "that Mr. Hoagland here has two sons in the Union army. Would he be trying to stab them in the back? I have two brothers and a brother-in-law in the ranks. All we want is to stop this bloody war by any honorable peace that can be found, and save their lives—save your lives, too. We're old friends and neighbors; why should we kill each other? Perhaps we'll all see these things differently some day. . . ."

At least they were listening. Other cooler heads took a hand in the pouring of oil on the waters; the sober and more thoughtful ones among the soldiers began to relax in their attitude and to counsel moderation; and at last the others, though grumblingly, fell back and let the Knights ride by. But some of the partly drunken or the

more implacable ones could not resist firing a few shots, both leaden and verbal, in the air as the horsemen passed on, by way of relieving their feelings, and perhaps throwing a scare into the "Copperheads."

When General John Morgan made his cavalry raid through Indiana and Ohio in the summer of 1863, it was expected and predicted by many that forty thousand Knights in Indiana would rally to his standard and enable him to seize control of the state; but on the contrary, as General Duke of his command complained, not a finger was lifted to aid him. Instead, he was harassed all the way by hastily assembled and grotesquely armed companies of home guards and elderly rookies. Nor is there any evidence that Morgan had any arrangement with the Knights or that they knew of his plans.

"Nothing can make me believe," said wise old Abe Lincoln, "that a hundred thousand Indiana Democrats are disloyal."

But they acquired such odium by these circumstances that Father's old college acquaintance, Senator Voorhees, was a target for insults for years after the war, simply because he was an Indiana Democrat.

Despite their lack of assistance to Morgan, the fright caused by his raid and by thoughts of the possible outcome had the Knights aided him dealt them a death blow. The Hensley township castle was upset by a dumb young rustic who had just become a member, who had only the faintest notion of what it was all about and who babbled to a soldier friend of what a fine lodge he had just joined. The soldier pumped the simple fellow dry and reported everything to his superiors. Quickly there came an officer to seize the books of the castle, and to summon

the officers, including Recording Secretary Kennedy, to appear at Indianapolis on a given day, for an examination. Terror spread through the membership, and man after man came to Father, begging, "Don't give away my name, Ben."

"I won't tell anything about you," he would promise, "but remember that the register will reveal your membership."

At Indianapolis they were quizzed by a half-military, half-civil group, presided over by Judge John Hannah, with whom Father was acquainted. Old Mr. Hoagland, outspoken as usual, soon got himself in bad. The questioning of the military men seemed unnecessarily rude to him, and he responded more and more roughly. Finally one of the inquisitors referred to his conduct as "treasonable." Instantly, the old gentleman's face flamed.

"Anybody who calls me treasonable is a liar!" he blazed. "We've just got different notions over what this war is about. I've given two sons to fight to save the Union, but I didn't send 'em to free the niggers. And I'm against conscription, anywhere, any time. It ain't the American way of doing things. Americans have always been free to fight or not, as they pleased."

"Then if you were drafted and ordered to report for service, you would. . . ."

"Resist as long as I had ammunition to shoot with!" he roared.

Judge Hannah beckoned my father to him.

"Better get the old gentleman out of town," he advised in a low tone, "before he brings down popular wrath on himself. There are no real charges against you men, and

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

nothing treasonable has been found in your books, so I'm going to dismiss you."

"All right, Judge, and thanks for your consideration," said Father, and was about to turn away.

"But, Mr. Kennedy," the Judge called him back. "When you get home, tell your lodge or whatever you call it, to disband; and my advice to you is to stay out of such things in the future. It might get you into more serious trouble next time."

As far as Ben Kennedy was concerned, the advice was heeded.

The casual attitude toward firearms bred by the war led to many a tragedy. One of them occurred not far from the time when I was born. Among Father's pupils—he was then teaching at No. 3, his home district—were a brother and sister, Andrew and Martha, who were orphans and lived in the home of their uncle, whose son Steven, near their own age, came to school with them. Martha, who was twenty—older than the boys—was courted by a young man in the neighborhood, and liked him. Having a respect for authority and the experience of age common among young people then—although Father had just passed thirty—she came to her teacher for advice. Her suitor was honest, clean and industrious, and Father approved the match. Seldom was any time wasted in long engagements then, and so, within a few weeks, the couple were quietly married at the uncle's home.

The wedding was private, but some of the friends who knew that it was imminent thought it would be pleasant to have an informal surprise party for the newly wedded couple. Since Father was the bride's teacher, as well as a

THE CRISIS



seasoned organizer of social events, the arrangements were given into his hands. The guests were to bring refreshments, and the affair was to start with a serenade outside the house, after which they would all troop in with a jolly uproar and have an evening of merriment.

But a secret of this sort can't be kept in the country, and the grapevine telegraph works well. Long before the appointed night, everybody knew of it, scores of others, including some undesirables, had invited themselves and turned the affair into a regular backwoods charivari, which began early in the evening.

Father and Mother were still at home when the bedlam of cowbells, tin pans, horns, shotgun and pistol firing began. It could be plainly heard at our house, less than a mile away. Father threw his shawl over his shoulders and stepped outside the door to listen, annoyed at the miscarriage of his plans for a pleasant and decorous evening. Suddenly, there arose a chorus of terrible screams, and all the other noises ceased. Grandmother, who was also listening at her door, called across to him, "Ben, something awful has happened; somebody killed or badly hurt, maybe. You'd better go down there as quick as you can."

He was already on the way, running. When he reached the house, he found a scene of terrible tragedy. On the floor, just inside the door of the front room, lay Steven, stone dead, with a dark pool of blood creeping out upon the carpet from under his body. Kneeling or hanging over him, shrieking and crying, were his mother, four sisters and the newly wedded cousin. The rest of the gathering stood about, stunned by the tragedy. The body

had not been moved, nothing had been done since it occurred.

"Who did this?" asked Father, looking around him.

There was a moment's silence, then, "I did, Mr. Kennedy," said Andrew. He was deathly pale, his eyes already seemed sunken and tears streaked his cheeks.

It was a piteous story of youthful thoughtlessness and rustic ribaldry as Ben Kennedy learned it. When the "serenaders" began their pandemonium, what did the brother and cousin of the bride do but join in with them!—Andrew with a pistol which, like those of the others, was loaded with ball cartridges. Perhaps the merchants weren't even keeping blanks in stock during the war. The revelers cavorted through the house in a clownish, orgiastic parade, in at the front door and out at the back, around the house and through again, making a deafening racket with their bells, horns and pans when inside, but firing their guns only when out of doors. But just as they entered for another round, Andrew, who was behind Steven, inadvertently touched the trigger of his pistol—and a ball went through Steven's heart. Some of the young men there present never took part in another charivari.

The war was on the whole not kind to our family. True, Uncle Thomas came through safely and emerged a captain; married a cousin of President Benjamin Harrison, moved to Iowa and prospered in business. But Aunt Caroline's husband, after coming home twice on furloughs, just disappeared during a campaign of the Army of the Cumberland, and was listed as one of the missing who were so numerous during the war. That was all we ever knew. His bones may lie under the mud of

some Southern stream, in a rocky crevice on a slope once swept by battle fire—who knows where? Aunt Caroline sought for years to learn something of him, but in vain.

I saw my aunt occasionally during my youth. She had a wide knowledge of history and literature, but seemed to have enjoyed teaching syntax and rhetoric more than anything else. Like Dickens's Uncle Pumblechook, who fired a problem in arithmetic at young Pip every time he saw him, Aunt Caroline liked to pounce upon me with tests in grammar. What was a participle? In how many ways could it be used? Did it ever part with its verbal significance? Did it assert action? Give an example of a distributive pronominal adjective? Of a disjunctive conjunction? What rule did I apply in parsing a verb agreeing with a noun of multitude conveying unity of idea? Grammatically, I must always be on my toes when I was around Aunt Caroline. I last saw her in the home of her daughter at Indianapolis when she was eighty, and with a mind still as keen as a whip.

And as for my Uncle Henry—well, that's another story.

The Golden Circle, passing out of existence, had been succeeded by an even more dangerous association, the Order of American Knights, engineered by the more disloyal elements of the former organization. It finally wound up in a series of sensational trials for treason at Indianapolis. But in 1864, when my uncle Henry, after an illness, was at home on furlough, it was in full activity. Henry, a young, zealous and fiery cavalryman, was intensely loyal and one of the most scathing of critics of these questionable organizations; and he didn't care who knew it. He forgave my father for going astray, doubtless

because Ben was too kindly and honest to be suspected of evil intent, and because he had seen the error of his way and withdrawn from such fraternizing. But Henry had quarreled with his wife's brother because of the latter's leaning toward the Butternuts.

The brick jamb of Grandfather's fireplace had become damaged, as fireplaces will, from the moving of big logs into and about it, some of the bricks being broken and knocked out. Some of the family remembered that a man named Stevers living a mile or so away, had a hundred or so of brick left over from some job and lying by the road in front of his house. Perhaps he would sell a few of them. Stevers, by the way, was a dangerous man. He was said to have killed a man over in another neighborhood several years before, though he had escaped punishment for it; and that he was an intriguer in the latest and most vicious generation of Butternuts was an open secret.

Henry rode to his place on horseback, in uniform and wearing his service pistol. What followed was described by a woman, a caller from another home near by, who was in the house at the time. The house was quite near the road and she watched the whole proceeding. The man was outside when Henry rode up, and the latter—still sitting on his horse in the road—asked if he might buy a few brick, possibly fifty. Price was mentioned and fenced off in country style, no conclusion being reached; then they wandered to neighborhood gossip, and from that to politics. There they split; their unreconcilable difference flared, and some hot words were spoken. But Stevers, perhaps fearing that pistol at the other's side, suddenly checked himself, as if regretting his heat.

"But you said you wanted to buy some brick," he

remarked in a milder tone, picking up one of the brick, casually looking at it as if it were a sample.

"Yes," Henry said, and they fell to negotiating again. "What would about fifty be worth?" "Oh, I dunno; would you come after 'em yourself?" "Yes, one of us would be coming by in the wagon in a day or two." "Well, le's see. . . ."

Stevens's hard, keen eyes, darting this way and that, fixed themselves on the distance. "Who are those two men comin' down the road?" he asked.

Henry turned his head to look—the men were nearly half a mile distant—and Stevens hurled the brick at him with all his force. It struck Henry in the back of his head, almost knocking him from his saddle. His horse, sensing the hostile move, started, whirled, sprang away a few steps, sending her rider heavily to the road.

But Henry was not quite unconscious. Raising himself slightly on his left elbow, he tried feebly to draw his pistol with the other hand. Stevens leaped at him, snatched it from his grasp and shot him twice through the body.

I MEET THE OLD FOLKS

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I WAS born on September 14th, 1863, just when the family were in one of their periodical clutches of anxiety over my uncles; for Bragg and Rosecrans were slowly closing in upon each other in the North Georgia hills, for what was to be, a few days later, the bloody conflict of Chickamauga. It was significant that I was born within 150 paces of old School No. 3, where Father taught so often and where I was destined to teach eighteen terms. Later the folks built another dwelling, more than half a mile further from the school. There I grew up, and there I live yet.

I was naturally too young to remember that cold New Year of 1864, when Grandmother's big red rooster froze to death. They had built a new chicken house, and the hens were persuaded to sleep in it, but the rooster refused. He was a real outdoor husky, he'd been used to sleeping in a tree, and by gum, he just couldn't change his habits. And that morning they found him at the foot of the tree, stiff as a board.

Father, who was teaching No. 3 then, had just two pupils in school that day—a boy in his teens and a young woman, each of whom had walked about a mile and a

quarter through the subzero gale. Why, certainly the schools kept open on New Year's Day! It wasn't a holiday then. But by two in the afternoon, those two had recited everything they knew, and as it didn't seem worth while burning the schoolhouse fuel any longer, Father sent them home.

I was christened Millard Fillmore because my father was a considerable admirer of that statesman; but the way he used to tell it to others in my presence was that it was because Fillmore was chief of the Know-nothings—referring to the nickname of the anti-this-and-that "American" party, which nominated Fillmore for the Presidency in 1856.

A little later I began to be aware of a jolly, prankish father and a mother whom he was always teasing, as well as of two older persons named Grandpa and Grandma. Grandpa, a stocky, erect, powerfully built figure, with neatly cut white beard and white hair not permitted to grow long, as was most old men's then, but kept carefully trimmed; the bluest of steady, keen eyes and a cleanliness that was a marked characteristic of the man.

Sometimes, when I asked him to tell me a story, he would look at me critically and say, "I don't tell stories to people with dirty faces and hands," and I would have to wash up before I could hear a word. He was a daily reader of Scripture, and I still have his Bible—printed by Matthew Carey, 121 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia in 1815; what books they made in those days!—which he used for the most of this life, and from which he proved his Universalism, just as others did their Methodism and Presbyterianism.

Grandma, also blue-eyed and white-haired, was as

I MEET THE OLD FOLKS

sturdy a character as he; gentle and motherly and charitable, yet ready and willing to seize a situation by the nape of the neck, when desirable, and make it listen to reason. She was a ministering angel to the whole neighborhood. There was never a case of illness that she was not at the bedside almost daily, never a bereavement that she was not there to comfort, if the home was not too far away; and she could come right back from one of those merciful errands, and if she found moral conditions at home not to her liking, could take a switch and dry-clean my gray jeans while I had them on.

There was another stocky old man—I found that he was Great-Grandpa—who came to see us sometimes and who was a wonder to me for several reasons—Richardson Hensley, my mother's grandfather, for whom our township was named, because he was the first white settler in it. He was born in Virginia and moved first to Kentucky, then to southern Indiana and finally, up to Johnson County; traveling this last lap like a patriarch—though just early middle-aged—with his wife, eight children, the boyish husbands of two of his older daughters, a grandchild or two, forty head of cattle, a hundred hogs and a flock of sheep. His wagons were drawn by oxen; the one wagon in which Davenport and Mitchell, his sons-in-law, and their families rode was drawn by a yoke of oxen and a pair of horses. That was in 1823.

From a tiny settlement called Nineveh, on the southern edge of our county, they hewed their way through virgin forest and dense undergrowth—often hilly and infested with rattlesnakes which, as some old-timers will have it, ranged up to six and seven feet in length—west by northwestward for six miles, making only about a mile a day.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Then they came to a cold, gushing spring on a pleasant slope—it flows today, just as sweetly as then—and there, without a word, Mr. Hensley felled a sugar maple, cut and trimmed a log about sixteen feet long, and then said, “I’ve cut my first cabin log. I’m not telling you boys where to locate,” he went on, “but here’s where I’m going to build my home.” They liked the region, too, and did not scatter far. One of the girls married a McNutt, and became the great-great-grandmother of Paul V. McNutt, whose name is often heard nowadays in politics.

Mr. Hensley organized the first school and the first church—Predestinarian Baptist, it was—in 1827; the new building which he promoted for the latter in 1839 is still standing. When the township was organized, his home was for twenty years the polling place for all elections. Every voter who came on election day got his dinner, ladled out of huge kettles full of a stew of venison and potatoes, and so did his family, if he brought them along.

Great-Grandpa always wore a tall beaver hat when he went a-visiting to our house and elsewhere, and always set it, top down, on the floor at the right side of his chair. If he moved to another chair, the hat went with him and took the same position. He could tell me of face-to-face contacts with Indians, which was thrilling, though his Indians seemed to have been rather a degenerate lot.

“We had a terrible time trying to raise corn those days,” he would recall. “The first I planted, the wild turkeys scratched it all out of the ground and ate it. And then there were the crows and the varmints. Squirrels! Why, when the corn began to ear up in the late summer, we would have to keep the children moving around in the

field all the time to scare off the squirrels. Thousands of 'em! And Indians—they had an old trail along the creek right through my claim, and they would steal corn and anything else they could lay their hands on, every time they came by—especially the squaws. I would catch two or three squaws sneaking along the edge of the woods, trying to look innocent, and I would know that they had corn under their blankets or deerskin skirts. I would give 'em a shake, and down would come half a dozen ears of corn."

"And what would they do then?" I asked, awed by this summary treatment of savages.

"Just grin—and steal some more next time they came by."

Grandpa's and Grandma's log house was only about a hundred yards from ours, with a rail fence between the two yards. From either, there was a long, pleasant view down a shallow, gently declining vale, made by a brook wending its way towards Stott's Creek; and I was told that Stott's Creek flowed into White River just over there, and White River into the Wabash, and the Wabash into the Ohio, and the Ohio into the Mississippi and the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico. It seemed a magnificently complicated system, and like Will of the Mill, I yearned to see it all, though it was difficult to comprehend how I could ever travel such great distances. Little did we dream what the automobile was destined to do for us!

Each of the two households had a big tomcat—and some other cats, too, but these were the kingpins. The old folks' cat was named Abe Lincoln, while ours, with characteristic impishness, Father had christened Jeff

Davis. They used to catch a squirrel now and then, and Jeff also came out of the brush occasionally, lugging a snake—I am seldom believed when I say up to three feet in length; slender ones, of course; black snakes and such—but I stick to it; at least, they looked that long to me then. Mother said she expected any day to see him try to bring one into the house—but Jeff knew better than that.

I was the only child until my little brother was born, nine years after me, and so received undue attention. I was over at the old folks' house almost as much as at my own, and it gradually came to be a custom for me to go over there every morning for breakfast. Instead of going through the gate, I crawled, boylike, under the fence at a place where I had enlarged a passage such as a dog might scratch out. To Grandpa and Grandma I of course brought back memories of their early married life, when they had little tykes of their own.

As for me, I was not only fond of them both, but I liked Grandma's cooking, and her generosity with molasses and honey and other sweet stuff which she used as a bait to keep me coming. She and I invented little games to play together, though of course nothing that involved running.

Grandpa told me great stories—about Indians, though he had no personal experience with them, about Daniel Boone, though Boone had left Kentucky before he could remember—strange how quickly Bourbon County put the wilderness behind it—and deer and bears and coon hunts, all things which were in his own experience. When he ran out of stories and had repeated them until he tired of them himself, he would say, "Why, sonny, I've told you everything I know."

"Well, make up a story then, Grandpa," I would command.

"Well, now, let's see . . . " looking dreamily over my head; then bringing his eyes back sternly to mine, "Now remember, this is a made-up story. It isn't true."

"Oh, 'course not," I would agree, and then he would begin; and I must say that today's pulp magazines lost a good prospect when Grandpa died.

One day when I was verging on nine years old, I happened to stray into their house when both the old folks were out, and only Abe was keeping house. I played with him in the kitchen for a while; then my eyes fell upon the stove—which had no fire in it at the time—and it occurred to me that it would be diverting to put Abe into the oven. The idea was of course purely experimental. I had never heard of a cat in an oven, and it seemed to me that the combination ought to be tried. Such a thing as harm to Abe never entered my head. I put him in, shut the door and waited to see what would happen. Nothing! Abe took the thing philosophically, and didn't make a sound. I was about to lose interest in the project and turn him out when Grandma came bustling in. It then occurred to me for the first time that the putting of a cat into an oven might be criticized by adults; they were so whimsical, one could never guess what they were going to dislike or condemn as immoral. My concern was somewhat heightened when Grandma stuffed paper, kindling and wood into the stove and started a fire.

By this time Abe had tired of incarceration and began mewling. Grandma didn't notice it at first, but as the

sounds continued, she remarked, "I wonder where that cat is."

"Dunno," I replied. I now began dimly to see the shadow of Retribution on the wall; but childlike, I sat dumbly trying to stay it by lying. I still didn't quite grasp or else refused to accept the fact that Abe was in imminent danger of being roasted. Anyhow, my own skin was more important to me at the moment than his. The mewling became louder and more poignant as the stove grew hotter.

"I wonder if he's under the floor," said Grandma, "and what's the matter with him?" She was growing concerned. The cries now became piercing yowls. Grandma paused, inclined her ear to the stove, then took a quick step and opened the oven door. Out came Abe, eyes popping, tail as big as a bologna sausage, nearly bowled her over and fled into the open. When Grandma turned towards me, I saw disaster in her eyes. She licked me soundly, not for putting Abe into the stove—she knew that was just an experiment—but for lying to her and persisting in it, to the peril of Abe's life.

I went home smarting in body and spirit. Some theorists today will say that an ineradicable mark was left on my psyche, that a certain hatred of my grandmother was inevitably bred there, but searching my soul as I may, I can find no sign of either. I was back with the old folks for breakfast the next morning, and none of us seemed to be aware that anything untoward had happened the day before. Given generally kindly and loving treatment, the spirit of the child remains very elastic; the effect of those lickings was only that which was intended—namely, to make one fearful of committing again the misdemeanor which brought them on.

I cannot recall that my father or mother ever objected to these corrections. Grandma was the matriarch, the ranking female authority in the family, and as such, was the Law. Furthermore, she seldom used the hickory on me, and then only for due cause—such as, persistently and after repeated warnings, scaring the chickens off the roost after they had gone to bed. If Grandpa was at hand, I escaped punishment; for I had only to run to him; he encircled me with his mighty arms, and there I was in a city of refuge whose sanctity no one questioned. To the end of his life he refused to accept flagellation as a corrective; but he would wrangle with no one whose views differed from his own.

Truth to tell, those two spoiled me, so others said; it's a weakness of grandparents. Once when the whole outfit of us went to an uncle's home in the big farm wagon for an overnight visit, we were caught in a shower just before arriving, and I got so wet that a change of clothing was ordered. I was dressed in a little cousin's best outfit—bright red waist and blue breeches—with which I fell so passionately in love that I did not see how I could ever part with it. I objected to having it taken off me when I went to bed; I arose in the night and searched for it, to put it on, with a dim notion that possession would be nine points of the law, but Mother had restored it to its owner.

In the morning I staged a lie-down strike; I refused to get up and be dressed in anything save that suit. Mother was making no headway with me; Father came in, to use first, cajolery, and then a threat of force. Still I tearfully held out. Then the grandparents appeared, with a "What's all this?" and heard the story.

"Is that all?" exclaimed Grandpa. "Why, I'll buy you cloth for *two* red and blue suits!"

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

"And I'll make them up," added Grandma. "I'll get the pattern from your aunt right now." I was already bouncing out of bed. God was in His heaven again, the lark was on the wing and the hillside dew-pearled.

One cold day, after I had started to school—in fact, I was in my ninth year—some of us boys were making our devious and desultory way homeward late in the afternoon, running, jumping and scuffling under the spur of the frosty air. Crossing a cornfield, where many dead stalks of the season past still lay, a boy named Bernie, three years older than I, picked up one of them and said to me, "Le's play Yellow Jacket."

There had been days of rain, followed by a thirty- or forty-degree drop in temperature, and the wet stalks were frozen hard. But boylike, I was ashamed to flunk a challenge. "All right," said I, picking up another stalk. We seized each other's left hands and fell to. But I quickly saw that I had made a dreadful mistake. Those tough, frozen stalks were like clubs of wood, and Bernie's far more powerful strokes punished me terribly. It was only a few moments before I cried, "Enough!" and broke away from him, trying to hide my tears. I left him immediately and hurried homeward, weeping.

Grandma had witnessed the whole affair from a distance through her window. She called me in as I passed her house, and I sobbed out my story on her bosom.

"Well, don't tell your father about it," she advised. "Don't carry tales. You accepted the challenge, and now you must bear the consequences. I hope this will be a lesson to you, never to take part again in such brutal play."

She took me into the house, undressed me, and with many a "Tsk! tsk! tsk!" and sympathetic croonings, interspersed with biting denunciations of Bernie which were almost equally soothing to my spirit, she bathed my welts with warm water and then covered them with some unguent—coon grease, most likely—treatment which possibly availed little, but her gentle touch and sympathy were what I most needed.

Next morning she was on the watch for Bernie, and when he came in sight, she planted herself firmly before him in the lane.

"You played Yellow Jacket with Millard yesterday evening," she accused.

"Yes'm," admitted Bernie, flushing and uneasy.

"I suppose it didn't make any difference to you," she went on, her eyes flashing blue lightning through her spectacles, "that he's three years younger than you are and not much more than half as big."

"Well, I says to him, 'Le's play Yellow Jacket,' " defended Bernie, "and he says, 'All right.' He didn't haf to play if he didn't want to."

"You knew he'd be ashamed not to," charged Grandma. "And to do it with those frozen cornstalks, too! Do you know that his back and legs are all black and blue this morning? He can hardly sit down, he's that sore."

"Why, no'm, I didn't know he was gittin' hurt, Grandma," said Bernie, for so she had come to be known in the neighborhood, after the custom of the times. "I'm sorry; I didn't mean to hurt him so bad. He coulda hollered 'Enough!' any time."

But Grandma was disposed to accept no excuses. She

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

delivered a scathing lecture to him upon the cowardice of matching himself against a weaker antagonist and with such weapons. Finally, she brought her right hand into view, which she had been holding behind her.

"Now, here are two nice switches," she said; and they were long and stout. "Pick the one you like best, and let's you and I play Yellow Jacket."

"Oh, no, Grandma!" said he, reddening painfully and backing away. "I—I couldn't do that."

"Why not?" she demanded. "Are you afraid of me because I'm an inch taller than you are? Millard wasn't afraid of *you*. I'm a woman and I'm seventy years old, so we'd be about equal."

Thoroughly humiliated, Bernie apologized again and again. "And promise me you won't play such a brutal game any more," she demanded. "Why, it's fit only for savages." "No'm, I won't," promised Bernie, who was not at all a bad boy. And with that, she declared the incident closed. "I won't mention it to anybody else," she promised. "But remember, Bernie, play isn't play if you hurt the other fellow." Two old men, aged eighty and seventy-seven respectively, now speak of that incident almost every time they meet.

It was not many months after this that Grandma was stricken with illness, and I presently became vaguely aware that something unpleasant, even serious, I knew not what, was weighting down the spirits of the household. A doctor came and went every day—an unusual circumstance on our farm, for as a rule we took care of ourselves when we were sick, and there were seldom any illnesses worth mentioning. I was in and out of the sick-room now and then, but one day when things seemed

more solemn than usual, Grandma asked that I come and see her.

"I'm going away soon, honey," she said, feebly putting her hand, once so strong, now thinned and tremulous, on my head.

"Going away?" I repeated wonderingly. Having had no personal experience with death, it was a possibility that did not occur to me.

"Yes; and I want you to be a good boy while I'm gone, and study hard and grow up to be a useful man."

"Are you going back to Kentucky again, Grandma?" I asked, for I had heard the story of her journey more than once.

"Farther than that," smiling faintly. "Far, far away." And presently she set forth, quite as bravely and cheerfully as when she had started for Kentucky, thirty years before. She did not grieve much at parting from Grandfather, for she knew she would see him soon. And so she did. A part of him died with her, and the rest followed her two years later, in 1874. They were buried alongside Uncle Henry, in the little family plot which had been started when he was killed, ten years before.

These are my chief memories of those two pioneers, both so strong yet so gentle, each in his and her own way; Grandfather, intrepid conqueror of the wilderness, who feared neither man nor beast, yet who never lifted his hand against a fellow being, and would not even slap the most refractory pupil; Grandmother, who quite as strongly believed in bodily chastening when necessary, yet whose heart was as big as the world, who was a loving, guiding genius to her family and a sister of mercy to her neighbors.

I ACQUIRE LEARNING

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I WAS an infant of five and half years when I took the first formal step on the highway to knowledge by enrolling for a short spring term at old No. 3, my home school, under a woman teacher, Miss Mattie Hancock. That fall, I had just passed my sixth birthday when the regular term opened at No. 3, with my father as teacher.

Here I found myself sitting in class beside a young giant of twenty-three, who was almost precisely as far advanced along the road to education as I was; that is, he was learning to spell such jawbreakers as "hen," and "fly" and "bird," and to perform complicated sums in mathematics, such as subtracting 3 from 6. Father sent him out to get a bucket of water on the opening day. Most schools by that time had wells in the yard, instead of depending upon springs, so he didn't have to go far; but he was absent long enough to give his teacher opportunity for what he wanted to say.

"I sent Nelson out," he said in a low tone as soon as the latter left the room, "so that I might say a word to you about him. As some of you know, his mother has been a widow nearly all his life, and he's always had to work; he's never had a chance to go to school until now. He is

not to blame because he has no education. And therefore, I don't want to see anyone laughing at him, I don't want to hear of anyone's making fun of him. Let's treat him just as if he were as far along as any of us. I believe you'll find him catching up with some of the rest of you before long."

The prediction was verified. Before the end of his first term, Nelson was polishing off the Second Reader—far ahead of me, his more mature mind conquering those elementary studies with ease; and thereafter, he learned with gratifying rapidity.

Education in Indiana moved forward rapidly while I was a youngster. The clearing away, just after the Civil War, of the injunctions and court tangles which had held it up so long made local levies for common-school revenues possible again, and the school system enjoyed its greatest advance during the remaining years of the century. The township became a unit and center of educational activity. The length of the school term rose to four months and then to five during the fourteen years of my country schooling, which ended in 1882.

Log schoolhouses were disappearing, and in Hensley Township were being replaced—in fact, I think nearly all had long since been replaced—by weatherboarded frame buildings, none of which, incidentally, were ever painted red. There may have been red ones in the East—though why, I can't imagine—but in our country, they were always white. In some more opulent neighborhoods of the state, an occasional one-room school was being built of brick, and this came to be the fashion all over Johnson County as time went on.

Of course the old fireplace had disappeared, and the

school heating plant now consisted of a cast-iron stove set in the center of the room, with a long pipe shooting up to a right-angled elbow, and then tottering over to the chimney hole in the wall, supported by wires suspended from the ceiling. On very cold days, the pupils sitting nearest the roaring stove were red and sweating, while those near the windows might be blowing on their fingers.

Itch and lice were still afflicting country schools in my youth. There was an outbreak of itch every winter when the pupils came together, for some scrub families had it the year round and distributed it among others as soon as school opened—whence arose the legend of the “seven-year-itch.” It could be cured at any time with an ointment of grease and sulphur—or other things—which killed the tiny mites that caused it; but some families were too ignorant or dumb or lazy—or all three—to do even this. Neither of these pests was any respecter of persons; the careful and cleanly must be always fighting them off in the country. You clasped hands or scuffled with a boy who had the itch, and first thing you knew, there you were with a case, too—sometimes just from sitting in the seat with him.

Itch raged among medieval royalty and aristocrats, and that Grand Monarque, Louis XIV, had lice under his wig. But long before his time it was known that lice were the particular guests of dirty people; an old English commentator was of the opinion that the louse “commeth out of the filthi and oncleane skynne,” and as Louis was one of the dirtiest of kings—one of his courtiers said that he “smelt like a carcase”—it is no wonder the he was verminous. The soldiers came home from the Civil War

with all three kinds of lice; and as there were no delousing rites then, as after the World War, and as some of the soldiers were not very particular, anyhow, it took years to undo the backset which they gave us.

In our neighborhood, as in most others, it was only a small minority of families who kept these pests alive and regularly handed them around to the rest of us. One could plainly see the white louse eggs or nits on the unkempt hair of such folk, especially if the hair was dark. There was nothing that could be done about it; compulsory sanitation had not yet come into style. They were freeborn American citizens, by gosh, and they had as good a right to tote lice around as they had to breathe the ozone. But my mother and others of her fastidious kind used to grumble aloud the wish that it were possible for someone to grab those young 'uns and stick their heads into a pail of lye water so strong that it would take the hair off. I had to undergo an inspection—an occasional treatment—every three or four days, with my head clamped between Mother's knees if I was disposed to be too restless. There were times when the pests were particularly active, when she kept my hair cut so short that I looked like a peeled onion.

The split-log seats disappeared with the log schoolhouse, and when I began my education, we had seats of plank with stiff plank backs; but not everybody had a desk in front of him. Some of the smallest learners had to do without; they seldom had more than one book to take care of, anyhow, if that many. During my school days, desk seats, always homemade, came more and more into use, and were always built for two pupils. Of course girls sat with girls, and boys with boys.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

There had been a considerable advance in the matter of textbooks since Father began teaching, nearly twenty years before. The McGuffey Readers, the most important series of textbooks in our educational history, in that no other group of books has ever exercised so profound an influence on education and human character in any country of the world, had become widely distributed. They were first introduced before Father entered the profession, but did not obtain wide distribution among the country schools for years afterward, because of the scarcity of money with which to buy books of any sort.

But the outpouring of gold and silver from our western mines, our Pennsylvania oil and other newly discovered natural resources, were making our population more opulent; even countryfolk could feel faintly the glow of it at times; and in the flush years following the Civil War, books became more numerous in country schools than ever before, though there still weren't quite enough. Today, for a pupil to go to school unequipped with the necessary books for every study is almost unthinkable. Seventy years ago in a country school, it was still a commonplace.

Even I, a teacher's son, did not always find it easy to buy all the books demanded by the curriculum, nor did the children of Charlie Green, the farmer who signed up with Father for the "Bird School" when he first came to Johnson County. That was why, in a certain spring term of school when I was fourteen years old, one of Green's daughters and I sat together in one of the double seats which had now come into common use, and in some studies used the same books. It was practically an un-

heard-of thing for a boy and girl to sit together, and was a sign of changing times. Only a few years before that, the girls had sat on one side of the room, the boys on the other; girls played in one part of the schoolyard, the boys to themselves. Now they were beginning to play some games such as Dickey Pen together.

Rosalia Comma Green was one of the finest characters I have ever known; kind, gentle, unselfish, always willing to help a schoolmate and beloved by all of them; not quite beautiful in face, perhaps, though she seemed so to many because of the loveliness of spirit that shone through her countenance. She and I were of about the same age and the only ones in our class, and so, because of the shortage of books, Mr. Weddle, the teacher, suggested that we sit together and share our texts. The suggestion proved to be a fine one for me, for her quick mind was of much aid to me in solving problems and clearing up difficulties.

Probably the only reason why I didn't fall in love with Rosalia was the fact that my heart had been given away already, and for keeps, to another. I'll tell of her later. So far, she and I were still in the inarticulate, rustic, puppy-love stage. She was a well-balanced soul, however, and my sitting in such unusual intimacy in the same seat with another girl seemed to create no jealousy in her breast.

Well, Rosalia and I were bending one day over Monteith's *Advanced Geography*, whose large pages lay spread upon the desk before us, when I felt a slight itching on my head, and without thinking, scratched it. Immediately, a large, husky louse fell in the middle of the map of Europe and started moving across frontiers at

cavalry speed. Rosalia looked at me with a whimsical quirk of her mouth.

"Is that your stock or mine?" she whispered, though she knew the answer very well.

"Mine, I guess," I muttered, frightfully abashed. "But I didn't know I had it."

She didn't hold it against me, for she knew how hard it was for even us cleanly ones to keep free of the pests, and that she might as easily have been the victim as I.

My father was as great an admirer of Rosalia as I was. She was married a few years later to a worthy young farmer in the neighborhood, and for twelve years made a successful and happy home for herself and her family. Then she was stricken with illness and before anyone had realized the danger, she had slipped away. She has lain for forty years in the cemetery of old Shiloh Church.

My school days were influenced by another forward step which Indiana took in 1860, a presage of its advance to a front rank among the states in the matter of culture. This was the creation of township libraries—about two hundred volumes to each, selected from the classics, philosophy, science, etcetera. The books were bound in full leather and cost \$1.50 per copy. I still have two of the volumes, in excellent condition. The libraries were to be under the supervision of the township trustee, and to be open the year around save on Sundays and holidays. Any family might borrow two books at a time for thirty days, and any single person, if a taxpayer, might take one out for the same time.

On a sticker inside the cover one reads that "Merrill and Company, having made the lowest bid, received the contract for furnishing the township libraries." Merrill

and Company's address is given as 5 East Washington Street, Indianapolis, Ind. The name is still potent in the publishing world. Of course the Civil War interfered to some extent with the operation of these libraries, nevertheless they were of incalculable value in spreading culture through the more than one thousand townships in Indiana.

It was in my early teens that physiology, the last of the eight subjects which thereafter made up the common, that is, the grammar-school curriculum—the other seven were reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography and American history—began to appear timidly in our rural schools. It had been used in higher education long before that. There were textbooks—Calvin Cutter's *Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene, Designed for Colleges, Academies and Families*, for example, published in 1852; and I have seen a copy used by a student in a young ladies' seminary in Kentucky—her autograph is still there on the flyleaf, with the date, "May 7, 1856," which should prove that our cultured young women of eighty and ninety years ago were not reared entirely on prunes-and-prism, as the legend-mongers of today would have you believe.

This book contains errors, it is true, but present-day readers would do well to look over it and discover how much our great-grandparents knew about the body, after all. For example, it explodes the myth that in those days sickrooms were invariably kept tightly closed. On page 434, under "Care of the sick," it says, "It is the duty of the nurse to see that not only the room is well ventilated in the morning, but that fresh air is constantly admitted during the day."

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Well, an attempt at a common-school textbook, Lambert's, had been published about 1865. It was copiously illustrated, but its pictures of the human insides were so ghastly and repulsive, resembling casual snapshots taken in an abattoir, that it is no wonder it did nothing to make the study popular. Parents and teachers alike were of opinion that it would tend to discourage the study of bodily functioning, and might even cause bad dreams.

But in 1874 a new book, Dr. J. C. Dalton's, came out, which included hygiene and which pictured the human machinery in a much more attractive aspect. It began to be used in rural schools, but there it often found the progress of thought from ten to twenty years behind that of the towns, meeting opposition on the part of some parents, who thought the study rather indelicate, and particularly unsuited to girls and young women. Even after I began teaching in 1883, there were mothers who asked me if I thought the teaching of physiology was necessary. Bill Nye wrote one of his best pieces around 1885, a supposed oration of a self-made man at a rustic Fourth of July celebration, in the course of which he said:

"I tell you that the seeds of vice and wickedness is often sowed at school in the minds of the young by teachers who are paid a large salary to do far different. What do you think of a man who would open a school with prayer and then converse freely about the alimentary canal? Such a man would lead a life of the deepest infamy if he had the least encouragement.

"Last winter we paid thirty-four dollars per month to a man who opened the school with prayer and then

made a picture of the digestive organs on the blackboard. And yet we wonder that politics is corrupt."

Making all due allowances for Bill's comic over-stressing, those lines still have a background of fact; that was precisely how some hidebound rustic minds regarded the subject. But reason and common sense prevailed over this minority, really rather rapidly, as we see it now, and the study of the body became an unquestioned pillar of education.

In my boyhood we were still playing the games of my father's and grandfather's time—Anty-over, Bull Pen, Old Sow Out—haven't I described that yet? Well, there was a circle of basemen—any number from three or four to a dozen—each a yard or so apart, guarding the pen, which was a shallow depression, perhaps a foot across, in the center of the circle. The bases also consisted of little depressions, so that they might be located easily, and the basemen were armed with sticks resembling golf clubs, whose curved ends they must keep on their bases when not in action. Any middle-aged man who played Shinny in the country in his youth will know how to obtain such a club. You just find a husky sprout which has grown from the side of a stump or tree trunk, and the curve it makes, first outward, then upward, gives you the necessary crook.

Finally, there was a herder, anywhere outside the circle, with another club and an object as nearly spherical as possible, of wood or stone a couple of inches in diameter. This was the "sow," and his object was to put it into the pen, past the opposition of the basemen. In repelling the sow, a baseman must of course take his club off his base, and if the herder could get his club on it

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

while it was thus vacated, he and the baseman must change places. When once the herder got the sow inside the pen, he placed his foot on it, and no baseman could touch it. He could then call any baseman he chose to take his place, and the latter must go outside the circle and start all over again.

It was during the seventies that the girls began to take part on the school grounds in such games as Dickey Pen—a simple but highly popular romp in which all the players



but one gathered in a small pen made of plank or poles lying on the ground—it need be only a few inches high—while the catcher remained outside. Some of those inside would challenge him by escaping from the pen and running for it, perhaps around the schoolhouse. When he went in pursuit, everybody got out of the pen, though the timid ones didn't stray far. The first one he caught must take his place.

Players had been warned, by precept and example, of the danger of collision if they ran around the schoolhouse

in opposite directions, but as usual, disregarded the warnings. Two grown players, a young man and a young woman, thus tearing around the building at No. 3, collided at a corner with such force that both were knocked flat on their backs. Blanche had her mouth open, screaming from excitement, and her teeth engraved a mark on William's forehead which he bore forever after. For her part, she had an incisor loosened and a split lip, which left a small permanent scar. Believe it or not, the same two, playing the same game, collided again in the following winter, with similar though not quite so disastrous results.

There were other games which the boys and girls began playing together—Hide and Seek or I Spy, and—oh, what a mutation!—even the semi-effeminate Drop the Handkerchief was occasionally seen played by a mixed crowd on a school ground; but there was not the kissing adjunct which later began to be a part of it in some areas when played indoors. No one ever saw any bold manifestations of sex at our country schools fifty years and more ago.

Duck-on-Davy or Duck on a Rock, which many old-timers will remember, was becoming popular in my early boyhood. And marbles!—we all had marbles now. There were even men of all ages who carried a marble or two in pocket, and at public gatherings, in town on Saturday, out behind the blacksmith shop or the livery stable, there were apt to be adult marble games. Until I was grown, my father could beat me at marbles, four games out of five.

Through several primitive types of ball game, we were slowly progressing towards Baseball in the 1870's. Town

Ball and the various Old Cats, as the East called them, not to mention Long Base or Long Ball, each had its own peculiar points, and some one of the several was suited to almost any group, large or small, that might come together at any casual moment.

Two-cornered Cat could be played by four—two batters and two others who combined the duties of pitcher and catcher. The batters stood at bases fifty or sixty feet apart, each with a pitcher beside him, so that the setup resembled cricket. A pitcher served a ball to the opposite batter, and if he knocked it far enough, the resemblance to the British game was heightened when the batters exchanged places. If they were too daring, one of them might be crossed out—that is, the ball was thrown between him and the base to which he was running. A missed ball—one strike—put the batter out if the pitcher-catcher behind him caught it on the fly or first bounce. If two or three other boys dropped in to serve as fielders, the strain on the two unfortunates who were doing the pitching was greatly eased.

When this game was enlarged by the appearance of more players to Three- or Four-cornered Cat, it resembled Town Ball in some respects. In each, the runner could be either touched or crossed out; in each a batter could be retired either on a fly or first bounce, and a ball could be knocked in any direction; there were no fouls. Some players were quite expert in hitting a pitch off to one side or the other, sometimes almost behind them—which was always good for runs.

I recall that just sixty-four years ago this autumn I made a triple play unassisted in Four-cornered Cat—caught a short fly, and with one throw crossed out not

one but two base runners—the second one being accidental, of course. So I, too, have had my moment of glory.

And there was Long Ball or Long Base, in which the bases were two long pieces of plank perhaps a hundred feet apart, and sometimes nearly all of a ten- or twelve-man team might be perched on one of them at once—ah, how much variety the boys of today are missing in their ball games! I don't know who invented our ball games, but they were ingenious and interesting, and most of them would be worth a place on the playground program today.

What with these games and others, what with swimming, hunting, coasting in winter, sleighing—in the farm-wagon bed set on homemade runners kept ready for the purpose—spelling matches, parties, box suppers, school “exhibitions” and sugaring-off time at the maple grove, country life in my youth was anything but dull. And I haven't yet mentioned the work on the farm, where in my latter teens I was a full hand—plowing, harrowing, sowing, cultivating, gathering, reaping; reaping by hand, mind you, for we had no machinery on the farm then save the neighborhood thresher which came around after harvest to do our wheat. We checkered our corn ground with furrows in both directions made by a single-shovel plow. We dropped the seed corn in the crossings, and covered it either with a hoe or a plow with two shovels about ten inches apart, called a “straddle-jack.” Our horses knew how to plow and cultivate nearly as well as we did; if they veered slightly from the appointed line, a call of “Gee!” or “Haw!” would set them right again. We sowed our wheat in the old Biblical

way, broadcasting it by hand; we reaped it with a cradle and mowed our hay with a scythe.

I learned to swing a cradle, but I was never strong enough to cradle a whole field of wheat; indeed, there were comparatively few farmers who could wield that heavy implement steadily all day long, for it required great strength and iron endurance. I did odd jobs for others when I could, such as driving John Halton's loads of poultry to Indianapolis, and I learned to do a bit of carpentry.

Most of my boyhood schooling was under other teachers than my father, for he was away for several years, teaching at Morgantown or serving as County Superintendent. But he was often back at No. 3 during my latter teens. And now and then, especially in snowy weather, some of the boys would get permission to bring their dogs to school and have a rabbit hunt at the noon hour, with the rigid understanding that they must be back by assembly time at one o'clock. The bell was rung five minutes before one as a warning.

We could scarcely wait to bolt our lunch on those days; sometimes one of the more eager ones started so soon that the others had to go with a part or all of their lunch in their hands, and eat it on foot. Usually the rabbit just zigzagged about, sometimes doubling back on the dogs, so that the chase didn't lead far from the schoolhouse. But one day when about a dozen sports ranging in age from the middle teens up to manhood (I was one of the youngest) went on a hunt, the rabbit proved unexpectedly fast and far-ranging. Through fields and scattering woodlands it led us, farther and farther from the school. Finally, some of the boys realized that we

were fully a mile away and that the hour must have passed. Distance, intervening timber and a contrary wind had prevented our hearing the bell.

The conviction that we were late grew upon us rapidly as we turned homeward, dog-trotting most of the way. "What will Teacher do?" someone wondered.

"It ain't hard to guess what he'll do," retorted another, grimly.

It was half-past one when we stamped the snow from our shoes in the schoolhouse entry. Father greeted us suavely.

"A little late," he commented, "but better late than never. I was becoming really alarmed about you boys. Better sit around the stove for a few minutes and dry your feet." (I might mention that no one wore overshoes in our neighborhood then, and yet one seldom heard of a case of pneumonia.)

After we had steamed a while by the stove in apprehensive silence, while the teacher went on with his work, he said, "Now, you boys have gotten partly warm, just step up on the rostrum, and I'll complete the warming."

"But you cain't whip us!" protested a young man in his twenties.

"Why not?" in gentle surprise.

"Because we're too old."

"We are never too old to be disciplined, Elmer," his teacher reminded him.

"But we didn't hear no bell."

"You shouldn't have gone so far that you couldn't hear it. It was rung. You all know the rules—books at one o'clock. Come!" and he beckoned ominously with his switch.

It was evident that protests were unavailing; and so strong was the sense of obligation, of submission to designated authority that even the young men finally arose—slowly, sullenly, some of them grumbling half aloud—and went forward with the rest of us. And down the line went the teacher, bestowing up to eight or ten strokes on the flinching legs of the oldest—because they were considered most culpable, and to show them that he wasn't afraid of them—and as low as five on the youngest. Next day someone said, "I reckon there won't be any more rabbit huntin' after this."

"Why, certainly," replied Father. "You may hunt any time, provided you do it within the noon hour."

Leaving the grammar grades behind me, I studied—most of the time thereafter under my father, though also taking a subscription spring term whenever offered—algebra, a little geometry, history (United States and world) and a dab of Latin. At last, in 1882, my neighbor Jim Moore and I received from my father's hands diplomas—they might be looked upon condescendingly now, but though typeset and printed on mere paper, they were considered perfectly good diplomas then—as the first two top graduates from the common schools of Hensley Township. I was nineteen.

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

I WAS crawling about the floor in a little calico dress and a diaper when my father was called to teach in Morgantown, five miles to the southwest of us, whence he rode or drove home every evening. He was there four years, then came home for one refreshing winter session at No. 3—no matter where else he went, he came back to No. 3 sooner or later—and then taught for two years in the town school at Trafalgar, five miles east of us.

In 1871 he became county examiner. This official, as prescribed by a state law of 1861, took the place of three who had formerly functioned in each county. During the school term it was a full-time job, with no little work at other times, too. The incumbent not only examined candidates for teaching appointments, but was supposed to visit every school in the county at frequent intervals while they were in session, “for the purpose of increasing their usefulness and elevating, as far as practicable, the poorer schools to the standard of the best.” He gave advice as to their management and their conformity with the state law; promoted teachers’ institutes and associations, and made periodical reports to the state superintendent.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Both my grandparents were still alive when he began this work—Grandma died a year later—so Mother and I were not left alone at home.

Father had held this place a little more than a year when the legislature abolished the office of county examiner and substituted for it that of county superintendent; and it was thus that he became the first superintendent of schools of Johnson County. Really, no new office was created; the superintendent's duties were almost the same as those which had been the examiner's, but he had somewhat more power and a slightly better salary. He was elected by the township trustees, and it is an interesting commentary upon the pedagogy of the times that no educational or professional qualifications were required of him. However, the people and the trustees saw to it, as a rule, that good men were selected for the position. Not until 1899 was a law passed, specifying the possession of at least a thirty-six months' teaching license as a requisite for eligibility.

From the time when he was appointed examiner on through his superintendency, Father was necessarily away from home a great deal during the fall and winter months, and Grandfather and Mother and I divided the work among us as best we could. Grandfather was no longer able to do much but superintend. Even at nine or ten years of age I had so many chores to do that it seemed to my infant mind that I practically ran the farm myself; and for the first time, I began to have an inkling of the meaning of life and its service. Each day had a full calendar; chores before and after breakfast, school until late afternoon, more feeding of chickens and stock, splitting kindling and carrying wood, then supper.

After I had wiped the dishes, Grandpa would invariably remind me—as if I didn't know it—that lessons for the morrow ought to be looked over. After an hour of this, Grandpa would have his innings, discoursing upon pioneer days and topics drawn from his reading, which had been not inconsiderable; national politics, noted characters and great events of history, his philosophy of life—he became a bit garrulous in his last four or five years—until I finally toppled over, asleep, not from boredom but from fatigue intoxication, and with difficulty found my way to bed. When Grandpa died in the spring of 1874, the house was lonelier and the burden fell a little more heavily upon Mother and me; but fortunately, Father was at home in the spring and summer, when the work was heaviest. He leased the sugar orchard during those years to some neighbor who could care for it properly.

Johnson County is about sixteen by twenty miles in extent and has nine townships. When Father ended his term as superintendent in 1875, there were eighty rural and township schools to be visited, as well as the three city schools of Franklin, Edinburg and Greenwood—a pretty extensive program. In a big gray overcoat, comforter and boots, he rode the circuit on horseback. The schools were on an average two miles apart, and two might be visited in a day if he didn't spend too much time at each. But transportation was slow in those muddy years, and often there were local problems to be solved. Some of the young women teachers didn't do any whipping, especially when the culprits were big boys or young men, but expected the superintendent to attend to it. When he appeared, the teacher would describe the

various derelictions, and sometimes suggest the number of licks she thought adequate. "Just wait till the superintendent comes around!" was a fearsome threat.

But this postponement sometimes had a happy outcome for the condemned youth. The teacher's anger might evaporate before the superintendent appeared, especially if the misdemeanant behaved himself unusually well in the interim. Many a young rascal thus wore down and cajoled a good-natured young teacher into a pardon for an offense which seemed heinous at the time of commission. But if the superintendent appeared shortly after the misdeed, or the teacher was a more rigid disciplinarian with a long memory, there was no hope for the sinner.

Father did not at all enjoy this role of executioner. His own victimization by a refractory pupil was necessary to enable him to lick a youngster with anything like a good grace. There were times, I suspect, when his stripes were somewhat lackadaisical—unless the culprit was a tough-looking subject who seemed to need a licking or if he happened to be a third or fourth offender. Then, annoyance at having this unpleasant chore thrust upon him again strengthened the superintendent's arm.

Father liked best the pleasanter side of his job; telling stories to the schools which made them laugh, planning, praising progress, answering questions which the teacher, mayhap, couldn't answer. Through those years he rode a small, ebony-coated mare named Blackie, who was known to half the population of the county by sight, and was the pet of teachers and children everywhere. Public roads, when enclosed at all, were narrow then, unpaved, most of them innocent even of gravel; there were fewer

bridges and more fords, and absolutely no culverts over the brooks.

From early winter to late spring the roads were a mass of deep, gluey mud—that rich, black, Johnson County soil whose mighty corn ears have taken gold medals at world expositions as far away as Paris, and made the “Johnson County Corn Kings” famous in two hemispheres. Through this mud, all winter long, patient Blackie went slog, slog, slogging, sure-footed, easy-gaited, afraid of nothing.

Sometimes, if his stop was not expected to be long, Father wouldn't even hitch her, well knowing that she would stand obediently without straying while he was inside, with his breeches tucked into his high boots, perhaps splashed with mud to his eyebrows, sitting on the rostrum, listening to a recitation, addressing the pupils, discussing business with the teacher or licking a delinquent. If it was recess or noon hour, the children swarmed around Blackie, petting her, feeding her bits of bread, cake and apple, all of which she dignifiedly accepted as her due. Perhaps no other horse ever slept in so many barns in this county; if they were on private farms, she and her master were always honored, non-paying guests. In spring and summer, she toiled on the farm, before the plow, harrow and wagon. And when in old age she finally lay down, never to rise again, Father brought some chloroform out from town, encircled her neck with one arm, and while the whole family wept, held a cloth saturated with the kindly lethal fluid to her nostrils.

It was during his term as county superintendent that Father became acquainted with the high-pressure coin-

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY



petition in schoolbook publications. It had begun in a small way in the fifties, and now was in full flower. There were publishing houses not only in New York, Boston and Chicago, but two or three in Cincinnati and one in Louisville, all competing for the textbook trade; so many that it became too hot for decency. Salesmen rushed around among state, county and city superintendents, school boards and teachers, showering cigars, sample copies, backslapping and soft soap, and in extreme cases, a bit of the filthy lucre. They would appear in summer, coming to Trafalgar on the little jerkwater Fairland, Franklin and Martinsville Railroad, and hiring a livery-stable buggy there to dash out to our farm, beaming with smiles, tossing out copies of books with prodigal hands, and sometimes, after much cautious feeling around, delicately hinting at a little percentage, a commission. . . .

Later on, when legislatures began specifying the books to be used in a state, city and county superintendents were frequently offered (and sometimes accepted) fees for recommending certain series of books; yes, and legislators were bribed, too. Muckraking magazine editors and newspapers finally went on the warpath, and the thing became such a scandal that Indiana compiled and began publishing its own series of textbooks in the early nineties. But that lasted only a few years, and then they took up the system of having the state school board, which was theoretically incorruptible, make a contract for books for the whole state with some publishing concern, the books to be delivered as and where needed.

In 1875 Father's term as county superintendent was ended and he did not seek re-election. It was a toilsome

job, that circuit-riding in all weathers, and for nothing remarkable in the way of pay. Furthermore, it seemed evident that henceforth politics would play some part in elections to the office, and he was never anything of a politician. He left a good record behind him. As examiner, he had given the first written examinations ever set for pedagogical candidates in the county. They propounded ten questions in each of the eight common-school subjects, and were considered perfectly terrific tests—as indeed they were by comparison with those which Father had undergone when he first came to the county, fifteen years before. And when he left the superintendent's office, the rural schools had been graded and classified for the first time in the county's history.

The final consideration for his making a change was that the citizens of Morgantown wanted him to organize and superintend their recently created high school, and from that place he could ride home almost every evening, run the farm in winter and do some of the hardest work. High schools were just beginning to appear in the smaller towns, but were still regarded by many as what would now be called boondoggling; at least, they would have been called so if that word had been known to us then. When Morgantown voted for a high school, a considerable minority group of citizens obtained an injunction against it. What was the good of algebra and rhetoric and history, they demanded; just alibis to get more jobs for teachers and keep young people in idleness for another four years, turning them out perfectly worthless as citizens. Father had begun giving some of these studies to occasional older pupils who wanted them and could cope with them, as far back as 1856. But twenty

years later there were still, and would be for decades to come, many dissenters who refused to believe that anything above the grammar-school grades was of any value in life.

The injunction was dissolved, and the high school was built. Its chief promoter was the township trustee, a red-headed druggist named Mike Arnold, who took such credit to himself for the job that he had a stone placed in the wall of the little building, announcing it as "Arnold's University." And truly, he deserved much credit, for his vigorous, even fiery championship of the cause, both before and after it became a reality, was the vitalizing ichor that made and sustained it. His building has long since been demolished and replaced, but that stone may still be seen in a corner of the school ground.

But in two years Father decided that trekking back and forth to Morgantown didn't pay, and that he would be better off back at No. 3, only a quarter of a mile from home. High-school teaching paid only three dollars a day then—though he taught studies in all four grades—as against two dollars in the rural schools, so the difference in consideration was not enormous. His strong arms were needed on the farm, even in winter, and he was always welcome at No. 3, so back he came, against the will of Morgantown. And although they invited him to return on later occasions, he never went back.

I am sure that he liked teaching at No. 3 better than anywhere else. That school and the near-by Beech Grove Baptist Church constituted a remarkable community center. The first log schoolhouse was reared on that lovely wooded knoll in 1830. For two winters during the sixties, the church was used as a schoolhouse, because

the school population had outgrown the second building, a frame structure dating from 1845. The third building on the site, the one in which I later taught, erected in 1867, was the largest rural school building in the county at the time and relieved the situation somewhat.

Beech Grove was a prolific neighborhood. Between 1870 and 1875 there were forty weddings within what might be called its "community circle." During the next five years the marriage rate lagged somewhat, but between 1880 and 1885 the former record was almost equaled; and as our marriages were usually fruitful and divorces almost unknown, it is no wonder that by 1900 the center of population of the nation was less than twenty miles southeast of us.

However, not all of the wedded couples settled in the Beech Grove area. There were so many pretty girls there, and so many young Lochinvars coming from other neighborhoods to carry them away that the local boys in the seventies, nearly all of them either pupils or former pupils of Ben Kennedy, organized what they called "Company Q" to fend off the invading tide by any method possible. They gave each other aid and information, propagandized against the foreigners, and in extreme cases a young dandy from outside who came too often to Beech Grove Church and who appeared to have too much sex appeal might find his saddle and hitch rein smeared with mud, tar or axle grease; all materials easy to obtain, for a tar or grease bucket hung under the rear axle of almost every farm wagon.

Company Q came into actual combat with the invading bachelors only once, and then made rather a poor showing. A "big" spelling match was announced, to take

place at Beech Grove Church, but under school auspices, and young men and women came from all directions to participate. Two captains chose teams for such a tournament just as boys chose-up for Town Ball or Baseball. A stick about four feet long was tossed from one to the other, caught in one hand, and then each alternately placed a hand above the other until the one who had the last grasp of the stick won first choice, and picked what he believed to be the best speller in the crowd. If his hold on the stick was slight and precarious, he must justify it by tossing the stick ten feet.

Another method was the insertion by each of the captains of the point of his knife blade between the leaves of a tightly closed book, as near the middle of the book as he could. The one who came nearest to the middle page had first choice. And in rare cases the toss of a coin was used.

As for other rules of the game, there might be two sessions, with a recess between. In one, the old method of sending a speller to his seat when he missed a word would be the rule, until at last there might be only one or two left on each side to fight it out to the death. In the other inning, for variety's sake, all would continue to stand, and checkers would tally the number of words missed by each side. And in those days, you had to rehearse your word from syllable to syllable as you went along. Thus, if the word was incomprehensibility, you proceeded, "I-n, in; c-o-m, com, incom; p-r-e, pre, incompre; h-e-n hen, incomprehen; s-i, si, incomprehensi; b-i-l, incomprehensibil; i, i, incomprehensibili; t-y, ty, incomprehensibility." If you varied by one jot or tittle from this routine, it was a miss.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Well, to this spelling bee came a wagonload of young fellows from the south side of the township, willing to display their prowess, either in spelling, courting or muscular activity. The affair lasted all afternoon, and if there had been no recess, there would have been no trouble. But during the intermission, the young stalwarts fell into—at first, amiable—contention outside, wrestling, jumping, boxing off hats after the rustic fashion. Presently, some one of the local boys took offense at a bit of alleged rough stuff on the part of a South Sider. Warm words, then hot ones were spoken, and Company Q coagulated in a group facing the visitors, some laying aside coats and hats in preparation for the fray.

One of them, Number 4—in their tremendous affectation of portentous secrecy, they pretended to know each other only by numbers—stepped brashly forward to reprimand and demand an apology, when one of the interlopers, Wes Slack, seized his long hair with his left hand and with the right proceeded to pummel him about the face and head. Company Q, a little slow on the take-off, were still spitting on their hands and venting threats while their comrade's countenance was suffering, when Father, hearing the rumpus, rushed upon the scene and succeeded in preventing a general debacle. Not long after that he induced Company Q to disband.

As for the school building, it in turn was the scene of religious revival meetings, put on sometimes by denominations other than Baptist—with a wholesale baptizing of converts afterwards in a pool of the brook which ran through our farm down the valley to westward. In the school building, beside the regular day schools and the

spelling matches, there were at times singing schools, writing schools, Sunday school for three years; box suppers, oyster suppers, ice cream festivals—all to raise money for some purpose or other—shows and exhibitions and Christmas tree festivities. Justices' courts were held there at intervals for several years, and it was a favorite place for political speakings—with fireworks when party purses grew fat enough.

There Greenbackers, and later, Populist apostles came belaboring the corporations and railroads, seeking to win some of our voters from the Democratic party to the eminent Jim Weaver's cause, whatever it was at the moment, and in many cases succeeding. There, too, free silver and gold Democrats met in the nineties in dreadful internecine warfare. It was only rarely that a lone, optimistic Republican orator showed up, and he might as well have saved his buggy hire.

Putting on school exhibitions was always fun for Professor Ben Kennedy. There was invariably a big one when school closed in the spring, sometimes one in the fall, and occasionally at other times. Spring and autumn were the favored seasons, for then the affair could be given out of doors (if it didn't rain!). A stage would be erected in front of the schoolhouse or church, and seating was provided for by laying log stringers on the ground and placing plank across them in parallel courses. The seats had no backs, you had to step over the logs to reach them, and sometimes a plank broke if there were too many two-hundred pounders on it, but what of it? Rain was the only possible fly in the ointment.

A string "orchestra," consisting possibly of a violin, guitar and banjo, discoursed what sounded to us like real

music; there were recitations, dialogues, dramatic scenes; Irish, German, blackface comedians—our conceptions of them, anyhow—and clowns who did a lot of gagging and ad libbing, sometimes wandering in while some earnest chap was doing a serious recitation and either throwing his memory off the track or ruining his effect otherwise. The costumes were the greatest problem, but the women often helped out as best they could by cobbling them out of cheap cotton materials. It was all very crude, of course, but it delighted those unsophisticated folk, some of whom had never seen even the shoddiest of real actors in their lives.

For another twenty years after leaving Morgantown, Father continued to teach in the rural schools of Hensley and at No. 6 in Union Township, with the exception of one year in the new high school at Trafalgar, where he handled practically all the four grades—too much for three dollars a day, he thought, so he went back to the country, though they urged him to stay. By 1890 he was beginning to be called Uncle Ben Kennedy.

WERE THEY UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

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A WHIMSICAL man like Benjamin Kennedy might naturally be expected to be whimsical even in his methods of correction. At No. 3 on one occasion, a group of grown girls was seized with one of those hysterical giggling spells which affect young women at times, and which are often willingly prolonged, just for the fun of the thing. Behavior, under the old rules, when silence and order were demanded in schoolrooms, often exhibited these waves of reaction. Starting with some very minor, subtle suggestion, a group or a roomful of pupils would be swept by an impulse to express themselves in a manner void of reason or intelligence—then most of them would settle down again to real study and decorum. And I will maintain against the world that the teaching of self-restraint and orderly behavior was one of the most valuable functions of the old pedagogy.

Well, the merriment of these young women upset the balance of the whole room for a few moments, and the teacher had some ado to restore it. The others went on very quietly thereafter, but that group of girls would break out afresh every two or three minutes, whenever one would look at another. At last, Father walked over to

them and said, "I don't know nor care what's the cause of your mirth, but it seems so hard to shake off that I must take steps to see that no harm comes to you from it. Maybe you can walk it off. Please stand up and fall into line."

When they had done so, he said, "Now, follow me," and led them all around the room, next the wall. When they reached the rostrum again, he fell out and said, "Now, keep going."

They marched on, around and around the room, still giggling a bit at first, but becoming more and more sober. Meanwhile the teacher, ignoring them, proceeded with recitations. Finally, one of the hikers spoke up; "Mr. Kennedy, we're getting mighty tired of marching this way."

"Oh, pardon me!" he exclaimed. "I'd forgotten about you. If you're tired of marching that way, and I can well believe you are, just face about and march in the other direction. That ought to be very restful."

They turned and started in the opposite direction, at which a wave of laughter flickered over the sitting pupils, and was quickly suppressed. The smiles on the faces of the girls were not so spontaneous. Their teacher kept them going until he saw that they were actually sagging from weariness, then let them sit down; and it was noticeable thereafter that they were able to restrain their mirth much more effectively.

There was a boy in his upper teens named Bent, an easygoing, none too brilliant youth, who likewise had a weakness for giggling and little propensity for study. The most commonplace happening in school moved him to willing mirth, and he was a disturbing element to those

around him. One autumn day, Bent, who sat by an open window, had snickered and choked until Father lost all patience with him. An outburst which proved to be the last straw brought the preceptor to his seat.

"Please stand up, Bent," he said. "Now, what were you laughing at?"

Bent looked at the floor, grinned sheepishly and finally muttered about the way Jim's hair stuck up behind . . .

"It's very funny, of course," admitted the teacher, "but we can't have the school continually upset by these comic sights. I don't know what else to do with you," he continued, "so I guess I'll just throw you out of the window and rid the school of a nuisance"; and with that, the athletic master seized Bent—who was in his shirt sleeves—by the back of the shirt collar and the seat of his breeches, and swung him backward, then forward, as if to throw him head first through the window. He had no intention of doing so, of course; but at the forward lunge, Bent's shirt collar gave way, and he shot through the window; and as Father, in his astonishment, lost his grip on the trousers, Bent's legs scuffed over the sill and he fell heavily on the ground outside.

Father peered through the window after him in no little concern. Bent was silent for a moment or two, looking meekly up at his teacher's face. Then he gasped, "Gosh, Mr. Kennedy, that sorter knocked the breath outa me."

"And what about the giggle?"

"It's gone, too," Bent replied, earnestly. He arose and returned to the schoolroom. Father met him at the door and said, "I'll pay for having your shirt repaired, Bent."

"Oh, no, Mr. Kennedy, I'd ruther you wouldn't," Bent hastened to reply. "I wouldn't have Pap and Mam know about this for anything. Please don't say anything to 'em about it. I can just let 'em think my shirt got tore a-wrastlin'." Another hint of the parental attitude of those days. Bent feared that his father might even add a bit of punishment of his own if he heard of the son's giving trouble at school. Most parents believed that "discipline must be maintained." And oddly enough, that jolt did seem to aid Bent in controlling his risibilities thereafter.

There was another boy, Madison, more commonly known as Mat, who was a confirmed time waster, not only for himself but for others. If there had been something in the curriculum in which he was particularly interested, he might have done better; but as it was, he just didn't seem to fit into the system; and yet there was nothing mean or ugly about him. Father finally became so exasperated with him that after one particularly annoying delinquency, he said, "Mat, I hardly know what to do with you," looking about him uncertainly. Then his eyes fell upon the large box stove in the center of the room, still fireless, for it was early in the autumn. Taking the delinquent by the arm, he led him to it and said, "Do you think you could get into that stove?"

"I reckon I could," Mat admitted, "but I wouldn't want to."

"Well, I think it is just the place for you," and snatching the door open, he seized Mat before the youth had time to comprehend the situation, and stuffed him head-first into the stove. He was cramming his legs in after him when Mat began sneezing and coughing—his advent had

stirred up last winter's ashes—and Father, who hadn't thought of that contingency, hastily drew him out again. Mark how report becomes distorted, even to the point of changing the manuscript of history! There were two versions of this narrative told afterwards, each supposed to emanate from eyewitnesses. One, the correct one, was that the teacher pulled Mat out or aided him in backing out, the other that the teacher pushed Mat in and shut the door, whereupon Mat turned around in the stove—a manifest impossibility, as it wasn't big enough for such a maneuver—and crawled out himself.

Anyhow, when he emerged, he was a sight to behold—clothing, hair, eyebrows, even his face covered with that white wood ash until he looked like a ghost. Father took him outside, picking up the schoolhouse broom as they went, and in the open air, gave him such a dusting down with the broom that Mat wondered whether this wasn't the real punishment, and the other just a prelude. But with more gentle hand, the teacher used his handkerchief to dust Mat's face and hair, meanwhile joking with him so effectively that both went back into the schoolroom smiling as if the episode had been merely amusing—as indeed it was to that tougher-fibred generation. The fact remains that Mat and his teacher remained good friends until death divided them, and Mat and I laugh over the memory to this day.

As Father's years increased, he used the switch less. Once when he was teaching in the high school at Trafalgar—that was in 1886—the janitor had left a gunny sack of shavings, souvenirs of some carpentry repair job of the day before, in a corner of the schoolroom; and for some infraction, Father picked up that bag and swatted two

boys a few times with it. It was not supposed to hurt them—just to remind them of their obligation to society; but it was noticed that they winced under the soft whooshes of the impact.

They remarked afterward that by gosh, there was something beside shavings in that sack; and sure enough, it was revealed that the janitor had also put in a few small ends of plank which the carpenter had left. Father was deeply regretful when he heard of this, but it is characteristic of the time that the incident was looked upon ever afterward by the community, even by the victims themselves, as a good joke on both teacher and boys.

Some may remind me that our first legislators, fearing that government might resort to torture, wrote into our Bill of Rights a ban on "cruel and unusual punishments," and they may wonder why pedagogues didn't ponder this phrase. I admit that the correctives I have described were unusual, but were they cruel? School patrons of the time didn't appear to regard them seriously. No one could accuse Ben Kennedy of brutality or sadism. Everybody knew that he was genuinely fond of his pupils, and in fact, in his latter years as a teacher, there even arose an impression that he was too easy with them. The pupils, on the other hand, liked him well enough to raise money after his death to erect a handsome monument to him, and they have a memorial association which still meets annually.

Yes, even high-school students received corporal punishment in those days, whenever it was considered that they needed it. Even grown girls sometimes presented a problem—as, for example, once when Father

was teaching in the high school at Morgantown. A daughter of Dr. Meddick—already mentioned as Father's physician during his attack of measles some twenty years before—was one of his pupils; a brilliant though sometimes a bit perky young woman named Alice, but called Tweet by her family and all her acquaintances. One day she and several others were sent to the blackboard to demonstrate each a certain problem in the algebra lesson. Father, bending over another pupil who was having difficulty with something or other, at last looked up and saw that while the others had practically completed the working out of their problems, Tweet stood idly, gazing out of the window, and with never a figure on the board.

"What seems to be the matter with your problem, Alice?" he asked.

"Nothing at all," she replied, with a fine air of indifference. "I've solved everything in the lesson, before class began, and I thought I'd wait for the others to catch up."

"But I assigned those problems to you scholars at the board," said the teacher, "so that you might prove to me your understanding of them and demonstrate to the others the steps by which they are solved."

"I came to school to learn," she retorted, smartly, "not to teach and demonstrate to others." She was in a difficult mood that day.

"Do you realize that this is insubordination? That you are breaking the rules of the school?" asked her preceptor.

"What of it?" she retorted, looking him impudently in the eye. She thought herself immune from discipline by force. Mr. Kennedy had never, so far as she knew, lifted

a finger against a female pupil; but she overlooked the fact that perhaps never had one merited discipline as urgently as at the present moment.

"Are you going to work out that problem on the board, Alice?" asked the master in a dangerously gentle voice, after studying her for a moment.

"You see I haven't, don't you?" she countered, pertly. She was beginning to be slightly worried over the possible outcome by this time, but the necessity for saving face made her persist.

"I said, are you going to?" he demanded.

"I don't feel inclined," she replied.

"How long would it take your feelings to change?" he asked.

"I really haven't any idea," she came back with a defiant smile.

Up to the last moment, he hadn't known what he was going to do about it. Whipping a young woman pupil was of course out of the question. Scarcely knowing what he was about to do until he was doing it, he seized her by the shoulders, swung her about, and pushing her before him, backed her along the aisle towards the rear of the room until she brought up against the door with a thud; she stepping backward fearfully, thoroughly cowed, now that her shoulders were held in his powerful grasp and his eyes glaring into hers. He swung her about again and backed her up the aisle until she was against the blackboard; turned her again and backed her to the door, then forward once more. After five or six of these laps, Tweet, whose face was red and white by turns, asked breathlessly, "How long is this going to keep up, Mr. Kennedy?"

"Until you feel like demonstrating that problem," he replied.

"I'm ready now," she announced. He released her, she went to the board, and with fingers which shook a little, rapidly chalked the problem and its solution thereon, explaining aloud the process.

Seemingly, she held no grudge against her teacher for the incident. She was well aware of her culpability, and was a pretty good sort, after all. But what about her father? As I have already intimated, Doc Meddick was profane and explosive, a sort of spitfire, a strong and positive character, yet honest and fair-minded. How would he regard the incident? Father was uneasy over the question for two or three days thereafter; and in going between the school and the livery stable where he kept his horse—for he rode home every evening—he went by back streets to avoid meeting the doctor. But it was not long until the inevitable encounter came, and the teacher was perturbed when he saw Doc bearing down upon him with his rapid, nervous step.

"Harya, Ben!" he barked, as they neared each other.

"Hello, Doc!"

"Hear you and Tweet had a hell of a time at school th'other day," reported the doctor.

"She did, anyhow," replied Father, relaxing a bit as he thought he saw no hostile sign.

"Well, you treated her right, I guess," commented the patron. "Hod dang her, I gave her somep'n to think about, too, when I heard of it. I want you to remember this, Ben. If any of my childern cut up in school or don't do what they ought to, punish 'em! Don't stand for any foolishness. Only way to make good citizens of 'em."

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

This mention of Doc Meddick inevitably recalls other reminiscences of him. There was a three weeks' "protracted meeting" put on by the Baptist Church in Morgantown while Father was teaching there, and the high-school principal, as a prominent member of the denomination, was one of those sent around to help the meeting along by talking to the unsaved about the welfare of their souls. One of the toughest prospects on his list was Doc Meddick. He was a good and useful citizen, but though he frequently contributed to the support of churches, he spoke of them as institutions for women and children rather than men, he was picturesquely profane and popularly supposed to be highly irreligious.

Father called at his office, and after the weather, the public health and one or two current events had been canvassed, the caller led the conversation around to the meeting, and spoke of the church as a socializing influence, a foundation stone of society. He was glad to see it being built up in Morgantown. He spoke of the numerous additions to the membership during the present meeting.

"Yes, and some of 'em that's joining ain't worth two whoops in hell, either in or out of the church," commented the doctor. "Most of that kind won't stick."

This was something of a setback, but Father went on to express his opinion that school patrons, parents of children, ought to be Christians as insurance for the future morals of their descendants, if nothing more.

"That intended for me?" snapped Doc, at last.

"If you can make it fit your case," assented the caller. He continued, and the doctor finally began to comment

in a manner which revealed that he had thought of the possibility of religion for himself. But, he said, if he went forward now, people would say he did it for popularity and patronage.

Father combated this and said the truly converted man wouldn't mind such criticism—would prove by his life that it was false. Yes, and right there was one of the difficulties, retorted Doc. What about his swearing? He just didn't see how he could stop; it was second nature to him—he swore and didn't know it. Could a man be a Christian and carry on that way? And would anybody believe in his conversion? Yes to both questions, said his mentor, if he tried hard to overcome it, the motive would be taken into consideration by God and man. At last Doc capitulated, and two or three days later, offered himself for church membership, to the enormous astonishment of Morgantown.

The "protract" was nearing the end of its three weeks' schedule, and at a church meeting one night, the pastor asked the congregation to express opinions as to the advisability of its going on. It had been so fruitful that some thought it should continue for another week or two.

After the usual embarrassing silences, first one and then another member arose and expressed his views on the subject. But the expressions were not numerous, and the preacher at length said, "Brother Meddick, what do you think?" The doctor was still a neophyte—hadn't been baptized yet—but he was a prominent citizen, and more comments were needed.

Doc, much startled, got to his feet. "Well, sir," he began hesitatingly, "I don't know as I've got a right to express an opinion; I ain't a member in full standing

yet, but I'll say this; if I was running this meeting, I'd keep it up till every damned sinner in town was converted."

Suddenly realizing what he had said, he sat down, horror-stricken. An electrifying silence held the audience breathless for a few seconds until the preacher could think of something to say. Then, with quick wit, he came to Doc's rescue.

"We could scarcely call a sinner damned, Brother Meddick," he said, as matter-of-factly as if they were merely having a theological controversy, "until he's beyond all hope of saving."

But everybody knew that that was a just a come-off. They had all heard Doc swear many a time, but—*in church!* Those who were present secretly felt that they wouldn't have missed it for worlds. In after years, when others boasted of having been present at some great event, these fortunate ones would retort, "Ah, but you weren't there the night Doc Meddick cussed in church."

On a Sunday afternoon in April, when the water had warmed up somewhat, the converts, forty or more in number, were baptized in Indian Creek, at the edge of town. As Dr. Meddick and the preacher waded into the water waist-deep, while the faithful on the bank sang lustily, "Shall We Gather at the River?" as the Old Scratch would have it, along came a water snake, wriggling its way down the pool at a few yards' distance.

"Parson, do you see that damned snake?" muttered Doc, pointing a trembling finger at it.

"That, my brother," declaimed the preacher, "is just a symbol of Satan, the tempter."

"But I'm afraid of the things," Doc insisted.

WERE THEY UNCONSTITUTIONAL?

“Have no fear, brother. Righteousness alone will conquer Satan. The Lord will protect you. And besides,” *sotto voce*, “it isn’t a moccasin, anyhow.”

Good old Doc! He was a faithful Christian for the rest of his life, but he never quite succeeded in purifying his language of cuss words.

I GO TO COLLEGE

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COUNTY Superintendent David A. Owen—later Professor of Biology in Franklin College—graded our papers when Jim Moore and I graduated from the township school. Jim's average was 95, mine was 96. Professor Owen was of the opinion that young men of such rare promise should go to college.

That was what was worrying me; what to do next. I was pretty well acquainted with the business of farming, but was not husky enough to stand up under the heaviest of it for a long period. I had a bit of skill at carpentry, too. But I wanted more education; partly for its own sake, partly because I thought that with it I might perhaps do something bigger than I could achieve with my present limited equipment. I had not yet actually contemplated teaching as a career.

Franklin College was only a few miles away. Rates of tuition were low and board was cheap. So under Professor Owen's urging, my father undertook to provide the money for at least the spring term's expenses, and I matriculated there immediately, in March, 1883. Jim Moore, in later years a well-known educator hereabouts, went with me.

Dormitory space in the college was limited, and we found an abiding place in the home of a lady who, having passed middle life, was known even to townfolks as Aunt Mag. Jim and I occupied the same room and slept in the same bed, each paying \$1.50 per week for our board and shelter; had plenty of good food, too. We went home every week end, getting a ride when we could, but sometimes walking, and taking our soiled clothes home for laundering. In such a manner, it was possible to get through a college year—this may seem incredible today, but it is true—for less than a hundred dollars.

Aunt Mag's eldest daughter, whose nickname was Dink, a big, lusty, jovial young woman with the most outspoken tongue that I had ever encountered, was openly contemptuous of our fatuity and presumption in thinking that college would do us any good.

"What are you boys here for?" she asked, bluffly, as we sat at table at the first meal.

"To get some learning," replied Jim promptly and with assurance, "look around us and qualify for a profession."

"Well, you'd better do a lot of lookin' around," she retorted with devastating scorn, "for the devil himself couldn't qualify you."

"Why, Dink, I'm astonished at you," reproved her mother. "You shouldn't be so rough."

"The truth won't hurt anybody," declared Dink. "I know what I'm talking about. I tried to qualify, as Mr. Moore calls it, and I'd better 'a' spent my time lookin' around, for I didn't qualify, and I know I'm a darned sight smarter than either one of these fellers."

"Tsk! tsk! tsk! Dink, I want you to hush," chided her mother. But though Aunt Mag was no weakling, she could do nothing with Dink. As to that young lady, the secret was out; she had had a try at Franklin College, and hadn't made good.

"Just imagine!" Dink appealed to the world. "A couple of clodhoppers from the bluffs of Stott's Creek thinkin' they can qualify for anything by going to Franklin College. They have to *work* over yonder," she warned me, pointing with her knife towards the college, "and it takes brains to get the credits. Why don't you boys stay at home where you belong; maul rails, smash potato-bugs and raise grub for us to eat? Don't try to get out of your element."

We two country lads sat helpless, speechless before this withering attack. We had never encountered anything like it before. When the meal was over—and our damaged appetites shortened it somewhat—we crept away silently to our room. Jim was so crushed by the blast that he would almost have sold his educational prospects for a dime and gone back to the farm. But Dink's sneers had made me angry, and really strengthened my resolution. I wanted to show her how wrong she was; I was determined to survive and to do it with some reasonable portion of honor.

As days and weeks went by, we and Dink came to know each other better, and we found that though her tongue was rough, she was really a kindly person with a great heart. She never repeated her diatribe of that first evening; in fact, she quickly softened her attitude towards us and became one of the best friends we had in the town.

Franklin College then consisted of two three-and-a-half-story brick buildings—both of them part dormitory and part recitation halls—erected in 1844 and 1854 respectively, and with a meager half dozen in the faculty; but to me it was Athens, Parnassus, the Sorbonne. The classes being small, we still worked just as we had done in the country schools; studied our assigned lessons at home, and answered or tried to answer questions asked by the professor next day. He commented and gave short disquisitions on the subject during the lesson hours, but there were no long lectures such as there are in colleges today. I must have done fairly well in my studies—Dr. Stott, the President of the college, said so at the end of the term in my presence—but I had no written evidence of it. Then, as for years afterward, no Franklin student ever knew anything about his grades. If he heard nothing at all, he knew that he had passed and made his credit. Only bad news was ever communicated to the student.

Franklin's student body was typical of the small Mid-western denominational college of that day. I am sure that more than ninety per cent of the male students intended entering some profession or other, and nearly three-quarters of them were headed either for the ministry or education. There was a sprinkling with an eye on the law, and a few who were studying biology and chemistry, with a notion of being doctors; and finally, a very few who, like myself, didn't quite know where they were going. If a boy contemplated life on the farm or in business, he didn't go to college. What was the use? As for the female students, they either wanted to teach or just to acquire culture.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

The heroism of some of those young men in acquiring education is a tale that has never been adequately told. Some of them brought canned and dried fruits and vegetables, nuts and other foods from their farm homes in their trunks, boarded themselves and did their own washing. Some of them taught country schools in winter, and could attend college only in the spring term; for the natural course of events in education has been turned upside down since then. Nowadays you graduate from college so that you may teach school; in those times, you taught school so that you could go to college. Charlie Patterson had been principal of the schools at Greenwood and Edinburg, had served a term as County Superintendent, and finally won a lifetime state teachers' license three years before he took his B. A. degree at Franklin College in 1898 at the age of thirty-five. He had seen the handwriting on the wall, the shadow of the time coming when degrees would be more important in his profession than any other equipment, natural or acquired.

Some students attended college for a year and were out another whole year or so, working, before they could come back. The ministerial students sought jobs as pastors of small-town or country churches, the sort that could afford preaching only once a month—which meant that these men had to prepare sermons in addition to their lessons, and be away some week ends. If a man had two of these pastorates, not too far away, so that the railroad fare didn't eat up the earnings, he was lucky; if he had three, he was regarded as being in comfortable circumstances, though the combined "salaries" might no more than pay his college expenses. The chaps who could go right through college without working save

perhaps in summer vacations, who had four or five shirts apiece and spent \$150 or \$200 a year were our plutocrats.

One of the two most memorable events of my college experience was an outbreak of itch, which not only set practically the whole student body, male and female, scratching, but also not a few of the burghers of the town. Itch in the country schools was a commonplace, but itch in a *college!*—I had never heard of such a thing. It just went to show that the intelligentsia were only human, after all. Students who were later eminent attorneys, educators, journalists, clergymen—they all had it. It flared up rather suddenly. Moore and I caught it, too, but I knew what to do. I bought a nickel's worth of powdered sulphur—flowers of sulphur, they called it, which used to be stocked in all drugstores (as in most of the country stores yet), it being a necessity in spring, when you mixed it with sorghum molasses and took gobs of it every day to purify the blood. Some of this I mixed with a couple of tablespoonfuls of Aunt Mag's lard, to make an ointment. Then Jim and I went down to a secluded spot on Young's Creek, at the south edge of town, took off our clothing, scrubbed ourselves with strong yellow laundry soap, used the towel vigorously, applied the ointment to the ailing places and donned clean underwear. We risked pneumonia, for the weather was sharp, but it was worth it. Two or three days later we repeated the treatment, and our trouble was over.

By permission I sometimes sat to study between classes in the recitation room of the president, the beloved Dr. Stott, who was the presiding genius of the college for more than a third of a century. "Kennedy," said he to me one day, "everybody seems to have a peculiar

nervous ailment in the past few days—wriggling, pulling at their clothing—can't sit still. Do you know what's the matter?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, but I still hated to blurt it out.

"Did you ever hear of the Illinois scratches," he asked, with his characteristic twinkle.

"No, sir," I replied, "but I know all about the Indiana itch."

"And is that what's the matter?" he asked, though I fancy he had already guessed or at least suspected it. It occurred to me that in his boyhood, when he was going to school down at old Zoar, in Jennings County, he had probably had a round or two with it himself. Who among the country schoolboys of early days hadn't?

"And have you been a victim?" he asked.

"Yes, sir; but my roommate, Moore, and I cured ourselves."

"How?" he asked, with an appearance of the deepest interest. I fancied that he knew the answer to that one, too; but he was a great hand for making you tell what you knew. And I told him.

"How to let the others know," he pondered, twiddling a bit of his brown beard on his chin just below his mouth—a characteristic, meditative gesture. "It isn't the sort of thing that one likes to talk about in chapel. . . ."

"I've told everyone I know," I interposed. "That is, everyone who would admit that they had the itch. Most of the students have been trying to keep it a secret from each other."

He grinned appreciatively.

"Yes, word of mouth is the only way," he said. "I think the news will spread pretty rapidly." And it did;

I GO TO COLLEGE

the epidemic vanished almost as quickly as it had come upon us.

The other episode which sticks in my memory most vividly was a typical student prank. There was no city water supply, no plumbing in Franklin then, and the latrines for men and women were separate wooden buildings on the campus. They always had names; the men's at that time was "Petersburg" and the women's was known (to the men, at least) as "Rome." Petersburg had grown pretty noisome, and parties unknown burned it one night. True, this excuse was not needed for such arson. Sometimes one of these structures went up in smoke just because somebody was seized with an irresistible craving to do something devilish.

Well, the college patiently erected a new building, just as they always did, on another site, and it occurred to some of the students that there ought to be dedication ceremony. Dissension had arisen among us as to whether the new building should bear the same name as the old, and this gave the promoters a key idea for the dedication. They decided to hold a debate between the standpatters and those who wanted to christen the new edifice "Constantinople."

There were only four dozen of the jokers in the secret; the rest of us were not invited or involved. On a clear spring night, with the full moon riding high in the heavens, these fellows assembled on the campus about eleven o'clock, nearly everybody armed with one of those fish horns which are a necessity in presidential-campaign years and in the cities on New Year's Eve. Art Overstreet, however, a member of the town band, brought his cornet, and the ceremonies opened when he mounted a

large dry-goods box which had been placed in front of the new building, and played a solo. What the tune was I don't know, but it was considered an artistic job, and was applauded with a chorus of blasts from the more plebeian horns, which awoke all the townsfolk in the neighborhood, as well as such students in the dormitories who were not mixed up in the affair.

Next the chairman introduced a student named Harry Todd, who spoke for the change of name. He asserted that the old name had unpleasant connotations, and assailed the clammy, deadening hand of tradition with all the vigor of a Futurist or a New Dealer. In the speeches of both the positive and negative orators, I may say, though a supersensitive ear might at times have caught the faintest undertone of innuendo, there was nothing superficially that—as the old melodrama advertising used to assure the small towns—could offend the most delicate sensibilities or bring a blush of shame to the cheek of modesty.

Todd's speech, too, was greeted with an uproar of applause from the horns. Then Charlie Remy, now Judge Remy, an eminent attorney of Indianapolis, was boosted up on the box and spoke for the negative. He advocated adherence to the old name as being appropriate and well known, not only to the students but to the town. A change of name would only bring a condition of chaos. Who among the townspeople—nay, even among many of the students—would know what or where "Constantinople" was? For a long time the effect would be only that of confusion. He deplored Todd's attack on tradition. Where would we Americans be without our traditions . . .

He was going it like a house afire when he noticed a sudden stir in his audience and felt a twitch at his pants leg. Looking down, he saw Jeff Rairden, the town marshal, and Professor Chaffee, the Latin instructor in the college. His audience was dissolving like salt in water. Jerking away from Rairden, Remy leaped down on the other side of the box and got away from there. The majority of the crowd ran between the two buildings of the college, with the two dignitaries after them. As they passed the north building, one of the culprits who had run up to his room in the dormitory, emptied a slop jar on the heads of the professor and the Law, and with that, as you might say, the fat was in the fire.

Next afternoon the marshal served warrants on five of the ringleaders for disturbing the peace, their trial to take place on the following forenoon. In the morning the forty-eight conspirators met at 8:30 at the old pork house, an abandoned factory across the railroad tracks from the campus, and agreed to stand together and share whatever costs the accused five incurred. Then they marched through the campus while chapel was in session, and downtown to the Mayor's office, which was upstairs over a book-store.

Their attorney had decided that a plea of guilty was advisable and had compromised with the Law on a fine of twenty-five cents, plus costs, which included five dollars for the prosecuting attorney in each case; pretty easy money. Each of the forty-eight produced a dollar, which in sum total, paid fines and costs and their own attorney's fee of ten dollars and a little more, but not enough for a nickel glass of soda all around, as they had hoped.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Dr. Stott completely ignored the incident; it was his way of minimizing such affairs; which may give moderns a new light on some college prexies of fifty years and more ago. Sometimes a gently satirical remark or two before the student body in chapel was all the notice that a pretty considerable prank or turmoil received. Fifteen years after this dedication there was an all-day class battle which raged in various quarters of town, even in the courthouse. They fought all over the college buildings, even on the sloping roofs, at imminent peril to life, knocked over the college telescope—not a very big one, but all they had—and broke it and had a wild time generally. Two days later Dr. Stott made some humorous comments on the affair in chapel, deftly ribbing the participants for their boyishness, and that was all.

It was a spring day and almost Commencement time when Dr. Stott sent for me, asking that I come to his office. There I found Mr. Musselman, our Hensley Township school trustee, and heard some startling news. Father had taught at No. 10, a new district, during the past winter, but upon insistent demands from his old neighbors, had been assigned for the coming winter to No. 3, which was too populous and influential a district for its wishes to be entirely ignored. No. 10 protested; they wanted his services again.

"But he's already been assigned to No. 3," Musselman pointed out.

"Well, ain't Ben got a grown boy?" some began to ask. "Why can't he take the school?"

"He's never taught a day in his life," protested the trustee, "and he's in college now."

I GO TO COLLEGE

"A term in college ought to make him all the better teacher," was the obvious retort. The general opinion was that any son of Ben Kennedy ought to be a natural born pedagogue. And so the chorus grew, "If we can't have the old one, we want the young one." A petition was drawn up, and every patron in the district signed it; and armed with that, Musselman came to Franklin. Dr. Stott, who had known me since childhood, gave a good account of me as a student to the visitor before I appeared.

I was absolutely dizzied by the proffer. I had had no expectation of anything of the sort.

"But I have no teacher's license," I reminded the trustee.

"You can pass an examination this spring and get one," he countered.

I was silent, thinking hard. I knew that money was scarce at home, and I reflected that it might not be possible for me to come back to college next fall, anyhow.

"It's something you'll have to decide for yourself, Kennedy," said Dr. Stott, fingering his beard and eyeing me with his kindly smile. "Better talk it over with your father." He knew that we were not prosperous, and he was inured to seeing students drop out every little while because of a shortage of funds.

"Perhaps after you've taught a while, you can come back to us," he went on. "I hope so." I saw that he thought it a good opening for me, and so I accepted.

The person most surprised of all at the news was Dink, my landlady's daughter, now one of my best friends and well-wishers. She stared at me in amazement when I told

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

her the news. Finally, she snatched me to her ample bosom.

"You darned little runt!" she said, thumping me with a heavy hand. "I take it all back. I didn't know you had it in you—but I'm glad as can be. I know you'll make good."

I took my teacher's examination, passed, and was granted a one-year trial license. And at Commencement time, as the spring roses were blooming, I said farewell to the shabby but dear old college halls. I never went back. Those two months and a half were my college education.

NEW PHASES OF LIFE

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AND so, on the morning of September 10th, 1883, four days before my twentieth birthday, I rang the bell to call my pupils to duty and became a country school-master at a slightly younger age than my grandfather. I had paid my ceremonial calls upon everybody in my district, and was cordially received everywhere.

I was so slight and youthful looking that I must have aroused a bit of doubt in some minds as to my ability to hold down the job. A young woman two years older than I, a pupil in the school whom I had known nearly all my life, looking with compassion upon me when school opened, said, "Millard, I'll be a sort of mother to you and help you out."

I felt my face redden; I stammered something in reply, I knew not what. But she was as good as her word, and was of much assistance to me in various ways. She was one of a family of seven children, most of whom were my pupils at one time and another. She was a teacher herself in the following year.

District No. 10 had been created as an overflow outlet for the populous No. 3, but it, too, was overcrowded from the start. The building was only eighteen by twenty-

four feet in size, and there were thirty-five pupils, the majority of them former schoolmates of mine and ranging in age from six to twenty-three, packed in it on that opening day. When you allowed space for wraps and a stove and wood box and a teacher's desk, it will be evident that sardines in their can were positively isolated and lonely by comparison with us.

The building rested lightly upon six or eight big boulders, between which the winter winds whistled under the floor, and its total cost, including benches, had been about \$200. There was no rostrum, and the blackboard was simply a painted strip on the tongue-and-grooved plank wall. Beside the benches running across the room, there were long benches backed against the wall along the two sides and across the rear. Some pupils had crude desks in front of them, and some had not. The six little beginners, who sat on a front bench almost under my feet and couldn't see anything but my legs without leaning backward, had to lay their primers on the seat beside them. They did most of their learning from the blackboard, anyhow.

The school term, when I began teaching, covered five and a half months. About five years later it was extended to six months. There were several winters when I was my own janitor. My pay at first and for some time afterward was two dollars a day, ten dollars a week. One spring the Union Township trustee said to me, "Millard, I wish you'd come over and teach for us next winter. I'll give you fifty cents a day more than—"

"You've hired a teacher," I broke in.

That \$2.50 a week extra looked like riches to me. A few years after that, teachers' pay rose to \$2.50 per day

all over the county. In the late summer, just before school opened, we had to attend a one-day township institute, where the teachers discussed their problems, and then rushed to Franklin for a county institute lasting nearly a week, where pedagogical celebrities lectured us, and toward the support of which we each had to contribute a dollar. For fifteen years after I began teaching, we received no pay for attending these affairs—and the township institutes eventually came to be held once a month. But at last, in the latter nineties we began to draw our regular daily wage of \$2.50 for such attendance.

It was well that I began earning a salary when I did, for bad luck and my father's almost total innocence of the meaning of money had brought on a financial crisis. No small part of his life's energy was given for the benefit of others. He would loan money—if he had it—to anyone who asked. If he found a dollar bill in his pocket when the basket was passed at church, in it went, even though it might not leave him a quarter to buy groceries. He was an excellent farmer, but about this time he had a string of bad luck. One season all his hogs were killed by a cholera epidemic which swept through the neighborhood. He had endorsed a note for \$750 for two friends who wanted to buy a steam thresher, and the other men defaulted. To save himself, Father borrowed money from some kindly gentlemen up in Connecticut, who made a business of loaning money on farm mortgages at ten per cent interest.

For several years I put the major part of my salary into the fight to save our property. The real crisis came in eighteen eighty-eight, when we would have lost our whole domain had I not succeeded in borrowing from

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

the county school fund, through our old friend, Judge Banta, enough to save the majority of it, which my son and I now occupy; and this debt we paid off slowly, over a stretch of several years.

Those were precarious times, when I didn't always know where the next dollar was coming from; and I, a church member in good standing, actually walked right into a saloon in Trafalgar on two or three occasions and borrowed five or ten dollars from the saloonkeeper, a man a little older than I, and a friend of our family since his boyhood. He and I were good friends, yet he knew that I detested his business; I had often begged him to get out of it. He had learned his alphabet on my father's knee, and always retained his affection for our family. When in later years I fought with the crusaders who were trying to eliminate liquor from the community, he bore me no malice for that.

When he lay dying, he asked that a minister who had been one of the leaders of the antiliquor campaign be requested to preach his funeral sermon, and that I write his obituary. Some may think that he was playing a final grim joke on us—putting us on the spot; but I do not believe that. I am quite sure that he liked and respected us and our principles, and believed that we would do the best we could for his memory; and so we did.

Having taught two years and acquired a feeling of considerable confidence in myself, I was riding out from Franklin one Saturday afternoon with my father when I said, "I believe I'll get married."

It was no great surprise to him. He knew, as did everybody in the neighborhood that there was a girl whom I intended marrying some day, one who had been my

sweetheart since boyhood. It all began back there when I was thirteen. I was walking home from church one day when, just as I reached a neighbor's gate, the family came along in their wagon, also returning from church. I ran and opened the gate for them.

"Much obliged, Millard," called the man as he drove by; and "Get in and ride up to the house with us," added his wife, hospitably. Nothing loath, I did so, after I had shut the gate; but as I climbed up among the other children, my schoolmates, I discovered that there was a strange girl in the wagon—a pretty little brown-haired thing, apparently about my own age (I later learned that she was a year younger), whose blue eyes as they looked at me, had a sad and somewhat frightened look in them.

"Millard, this is Naomi Viola," said the lady. "My niece. She's going to live with us."

As I looked shyly at her and then away, grinning, country-boylike, with no polished words of greeting, something happened inside me. I said to myself, "You're my girl!" And so she has been from that day to this.

Her story was a typical rustic tragedy of the time. Her father, a farmer and an addict of coon hunting, had fallen from a tree into a creek one night while climbing after a treed animal, sustaining considerable injuries and contracting a heavy cold, from the effects of which and from improper medical care, he went into a "decline," as folk used to say, and died. His widow struggled along for five years more, and then she, too, worn out by her labors, gave up the ghost. The children's guardian, an uncle, thereupon parceled them out among three aunts, in whose households they grew to womanhood.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

It was not many moons after our meeting that Naomi Viola discovered my tenderness for her—as I dare say others did, too; it was probably as noticeable in my countenance as an Indian's war paint—and her heart responded to it. There was no open love-making—country youngsters of that age were far too unsophisticated for that; but love's signals were there, just the same. One gave her an apple or some carefully gathered beech-nuts now and then—women liked to munch on the pindling little things; and when one sweetheart caught another, say, in Dickey Pen, it was not with the three quick slaps and the usually loud, hasty "One, two, three!" the prescribed formula for consummating a catch. Instead, the three strokes were what we used to call love taps; the "One . . . two . . . three," was slow, while we looked languishingly into the girl's eyes, and clung to her arm or shoulder a second or two longer than necessary, loosing her with reluctance.

Father had come back to No. 3, and about a year after our meeting he was planning an exhibition. Ola, who at thirteen had displayed unexpected dramatic talent, came over to our house on his invitation to stay overnight and aid in selecting some recitations and dialogues. We had a few of the little paper-backed pamphlet collections of those things which used to be the right bowers of country schools, and Father set us to looking through some of them after supper, while he went into the next room, where Mother was, to write a letter. Fortunately, my little brother had been put to bed.

To work through a book, it was necessary to draw up two chairs side by side before the fire; and there we sat and pored over the numbers. I was rapturously conscious

of the proximity of my beloved, of the touch of her shoulder to mine. At last I said in a low tone, "Ola, I don't suppose I ought to, but I just can't help putting my arm around you."

"I don't mind," she murmured, breathlessly.

And so I did, and thus we sat, both very happy, while we pondered and discussed the rest of the books. There were no kisses; we were still too restrained, too inexperienced in love to be more demonstrative. I think I suspected that if I had asked for a kiss, she would have refused and would have been disappointed in me. At last, when we heard Father's footsteps approaching the door, I took my arm away.

"Well, did you find what you wanted?" he asked.

"Yes," we replied in chorus; but we didn't mean the recitations.

I may add that Ola made quite a hit in that program. Given opportunity, I think she might have made a notable actress. Why, years later, when we had a dramatic company of our own in Hensley—talk about your Little Theaters! Shucks! We could have given them pointers fifty years and more ago—she played leads in *Lady Audley's Secret*, *East Lynne* and *Ten Nights in a Bedroom* and won encomiums from the best critics in Hensley and Union Townships and Morgantown. For you must know that we at various times played engagements in such places as Trafalgar, Morgantown, Samaria, Union Village and Bangersville; appearing in Moore's Hall in Trafalgar and Knight's Hall in Morgantown, which were upstairs over stores but which had real stages; elsewhere, believe it or not, sometimes in churches, if they would erect a temporary stage for us, we giving

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

them the proceeds after our expenses had been paid. The glory we won was reward enough.

We had a few simple pieces of scenery, painted by a local house, sign and ornamental painter and glazier, on frames which I had built and canvased. Two- or three-piece string "bands," locally recruited, played between acts for nothing and glad to do it. In Morgantown and Trafalgar they even dared to supply music at the cued spots during the action—you may perhaps find them today in the pamphlet versions of the plays in your big libraries; the soft, quivery strains which added so much to the sob scenes, and the nervous, premonitory sort which heralded the climaxes. People laugh nowadays at this naivete of the old drama, but the movies are doing precisely the same thing at this moment, and everybody thinks it's wonderful.

We even rose to the height of presenting our repertoire in two-night engagements at Trafalgar and Morgantown, packing them in every time; and when Ola, as Lady Audley, brought the last act to its terrific climax by defying the man who had fathomed her secret; "You shall not live to do it! I'll kill you first! What have I done to you, Robert Audley, that you elect yourself my persecutor? What have I done that you should dog my footsteps, watch my looks and play the spy upon me? Coward! But you know not what it is to wrestle with me. Alone, unaided, I defy you, Robert Audley! Be judge, approver, all . . . bring forth your witnesses!"—at that, it seemed that the breathless, close-packed audiences would bring down the roof with their enthusiasm.

But of course all this was years later, after we were married. There in our middle teens, we were two young-

sters deeply in love, but forbidden to do any courting. Ola's aunt had decreed that she was not to have a beau until she was sixteen, and it seemed the natural and inevitable thing for us to bow to the edict. There was not even a kiss stolen. Passions were under better control when the element of morality bulked so much larger in sexual matters. "Ought" was a potent word.

Ola had to do a great deal of work at her aunt's home—too much, I thought angrily; sometimes she had to stay at home from school to do it. There were summers when I was busy with farm work when I might not see her, week in and week out, save for the brief glimpse at church on Sunday. But one autumn when I was just turned seventeen, a neighbor was giving a party—one of those affairs at which we played dancing games like Weevily Wheat and Skip-to-my-Lou—only you mustn't call them dancing.

The players supplied their own music, all singing a semi-nonsensical song, to which they skipped about in formations resembling quadrilles or reels. If we had done this to the music of a fiddle, it was generally conceded that it would have been dancing—a vain pastime upon which good Methodists and Baptists frowned.

True, there were no waists encircled by masculine arms in our country dances as in the waltz, then fashionable in the towns; such a liberty was simply beyond the pale. Nevertheless, in some conservative neighborhoods, church members who so far forgot themselves as to shake a foot to fiddle music, even in a quadrille, were liable to be haled into church meeting, reprimanded and possibly expelled—though this latter immolation seldom happened in the latter nineteenth century. Church trials of

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

dancers were usually more sound than fury, and the church as a rule found it less embarrassing to see nothing and hear nothing of such occasional frivolity on the part of one of its members. But when dancing became "hugging set to music," as the Methodists described the waltz and two-step, there arose a new wave of ecclesiastical rage against it.

The argument that hopping about to our own singing wasn't dancing was refuted by the very lines of one of the games we played:

*Oh, law, Sally, my toes are sore,
Dancing on your sandy floor.
I'll dance this reel and then one more,
Dancing on your sandy floor . . .*

and by the fact that all the songs were in quadrille tempo. In the very lilt of the lines,

*Change and swing to your best liking,
That's the way, my dar—ling,*

you can hear the rhythmic thump, thump, thump of cowhide shoes and boots on worn plank floors. And old! How old some of those games were, there's no telling. The "Charlie" who runs all through the stanzas of Weevily Wheat,

*Don't want none of your weevily wheat,
To bake a cake for Char—lie,*

is said to have been "Bonny Prince Charlie"—Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, Charlie over the water, as another old Jacobite song called him, the last Stuart

who made an attempt upon the throne of England and saw his hopes vanish forever on the field of Culloden in 1746.

At parties like this, if the crowd was large and the weather good, the young men guests, with the full consent of the host and hostess, might make more room for dancing by dismantling the beds and moving them and other heavy furniture into the yard; bringing it back and setting it up again, all shipshape, after the party was over. We youngsters in our teens didn't escort girls to these parties; we took them home therefrom if we could make the grade.

As parties from spring until autumn were apt to begin at dusk or before, the girls thought nothing of going with each other in couples or coveys. So I went alone, falling in with other boys on the way, and looking about eagerly for Ola after I got there. I found her in a merry group, her eyes already on me as I approached; there was never any coquetry in her. It was half an hour, perhaps, before we found ourselves alone for a moment, and I saw that she had something on her mind. She looked at me, then away again, blushing a little.

"Millard," she said, shyly, softly. "I'm sixteen."

I stood stunned for a moment by the implications of the news. Then, "I thought it was about this time," I remarked, ineptly. As a matter of fact, I had lost track of the date.

"My birthday was two weeks ago."

"Then may I walk home with you tonight?"

"Yes."

That was a milestone, a turning point. The whole course of history veered slightly at that moment. I think

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

we have never had a happier evening than that. As we played Skip-to-my-Lou and sang,

I'll get another one, pretty as you,

our eyes told each other that this was the best joke in the world, it was so impossible. All the stars in the universe sang together as we went home that night. We were still very young. Five and a half years, long yet very happy ones, were to pass before I rode out with Father from Franklin that Saturday afternoon and plumped my decision at him; and in all that time, we had never had a serious tiff. Perhaps it was because we didn't see too much of each other; perhaps—oh, well, I don't know; maybe we were just that sort of people.

But when I said, "I believe I'll get married," my father, thinking of his financial embarrassment, said, "I wouldn't be in too much of a hurry if I were you."

"I haven't been in a hurry," I retorted. "I've been waiting nearly ten years."

I could see a smothered smile under his beard. "Most of those ten years," he commented, "you'd have been considered a le-etle young to marry."

"Well, I'm twenty-two now. I've made good at teaching. I've got a place for next winter at two and a half a week more than I've been getting." I leaned back and swelled a bit as I said this. "I'm not afraid for the future."

I had indeed already tasted the fruits of pedagogical success and found myself an important personage in the township, a community leader ex officio. I had conducted several spelling matches and a debating society; I had written up two or three weddings for the county papers in what was considered to be elegant style (and

been best man at one of them), and as many obituaries; ever since then I have been the favorite obituary writer for the township. I had been clerk at a sale of a neighbor's household goods and implements, and although as yet unmarried—the only unmarried teacher, I think, in the township—I had been selected to chaperon a mixed overnight fishing party which drove to White River.

Two or three mothers of young women in that party, by the way, specified that someone must stay up all night; but as we expected to set trout lines—popularly called “trot” lines—across the river and gather the fish from them at intervals during the night, that was a stipulation easy to carry out. It was just after harvest, when there was a lull in the farm work and a full moon; there were sixteen or eighteen couples—of course I took Ola—and we went in four two-horse farm wagons. Another couple and Ola and I sat up during the night by the campfire, running the trout line in a skiff every two or three hours and dutifully dropping two big eels which were among the catch into the two wagons where the rest of the girls slept; this turned the night into bedlam for a few minutes.

When we drove home, late on the following afternoon, there had been some decent love-making, but I think I know those young people well enough to say that none had overstepped the deadlines of our prevailing moral code.

Father clucked to the horses after I had stated my case, and was silent for a few moments. Then, “Where are you going to live?” he asked.

“With you,” I replied, boldly, “until I can build a little shack for ourselves somewhere else on the farm—

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

if we succeed in holding it. I'll do all I can to help with that."

I thought I saw relief in his face. He had feared that I might want to go away and leave him to fight the battle for the home alone. It touched me deeply and gave me a strange feeling to realize that we had reached the point where he was beginning to lean on me, although he was only in his early fifties.

"All right, then," he said, heartily, "and good luck to you, my boy."

Ola was sad because she could bring me nothing in the way of a dowry such as was common in the country; that is, no trousseau, no stock of bedding, no handsome flower-basket or log-cabin pieced quilts. She had never had opportunity to prepare any of these things. But that didn't matter to me. She brought me herself and a loyalty and cooperation unsurpassed, I am sure, in the history of matrimony. In March she came over to our house and stayed several days, helping us during the sugaring-off season, when we made eighty gallons of maple syrup and a hundred pounds of sugar for the market, in addition to what we needed ourselves. And during that visit it was agreed that we would be married within the following month.

And so, on April 26, 1885, just as the apple blossoms were opening, at three o'clock on a beautiful spring Sunday afternoon, she and I were married. We issued no formal invitations; just let it be known that anyone might come who wished, and they did—from all over the township, from neighboring townships and Morgantown; most of them pupils, patrons, friends and acquaintances of mine, of course, but some who knew no more of me than that I was Ben Kennedy's boy. Their

number ran into the hundreds. Of course only a few of them could have gotten into the house, and so, not to be stingy with the show, we were married on the front porch.

The preacher who joined us was young Bob Sellers, just out of Butler College. I gave him two dollars as a fee, which he seemed to think adequate, or at least, as much as he could expect. Later in the afternoon, another young man, a cousin of Ola's named Amos Vandivier, whispered that he wished to speak to me privately, and we succeeded in slipping out into a little woods path near the house. I was mystified by this secret procedure, but soon found what he wanted. Considering me now a high authority, he wished to consult me on the subject of marriage. He was affianced to a very worthy girl, he wanted to wed, but his means were small and he was cautious, not to say timid. How much cash in hand would I say that a man ought to have before taking the fateful step?

"I'm afraid my advice wouldn't encourage you much," said I, "because you'd lose respect for my judgment. At the present moment, after paying the preacher, I have just seventy-five cents."

He stared at me, open-mouthed. "You don't mean that!"

"But I do." I turned my trousers pocket inside out and showed him the half dollar and quarter. "I haven't another dime."

"For God's sake, Millard," he gasped. "How do you get up nerve to do it?"

"It's just because I have confidence in the future," I said. "I have a job in sight for next fall, I have a farm back of me—just as you have—so that we're sure of something to eat until then. We're going to live with the

old folks—as you could do—until I can build a little hut of our own; you might do that, too. You and I will probably never be rich, Amos. We haven't the genius to sit at a desk and juggle banks and railroads just with our brains. We'll always have to work for what we get; but on this noble soil, I see no reason why we shouldn't be safe and comfortable, and even reach easy circumstances, maybe, as long as we stay close to the land."

He took courage from my example, and four months later he, too, was married.

We lived with my parents for two years, and then I built for ourselves on a pleasant site a few hundred yards west of theirs. The main part was only sixteen by twenty-two feet in size, with a lean-to. I hewed the log sills with my own hands and bought a small bill of lumber. I did much of the carpentry myself, and paid out about fifty dollars for what help I had. Then I furnished it complete with seventy-five dollars' worth of furniture bought on long-time credit at Trafalgar. Of course we had rag carpet and homemade bedding, some of it created by Ola since her marriage. When the first farm wagonload of furniture, including two stoves, a table, the bed and the dresser, came out from town, Father said, "When are you going to begin housekeeping?"

"Tonight," I replied. I went over to our new home, set up the kitchen stove and table, and the bed with its trappings, and we moved in with our baby, then six months old. I started a fire in the stove, which threw off those atrocious fumes of polish peculiar to new stoves, and Ola prepared supper. There were no chairs yet, so I laid two planks across a barrel for a table, and we ate standing.

ROTATION IN OFFICE

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I DREW up a chronicle of my father's incumbencies and my own the other day, and they look like the journals of a couple of nomads, or the police records of a family of migrant workers. If I were to set them down in full, they might remind readers of those big-city reporters who flit about from paper to paper so rapidly, I am told, that on one occasion one of them in New York absent-mindedly telephoned a story in to, let us say, the *World*, forgetting that he had gone over to the *American* the day before.

But comparatively little of our moving was our own doing; seldom ours entirely unless we went into another township. Most of it was just a shuffling about of the staff by the trustee. Perhaps he had a new teacher whom he wanted to break in on an easy assignment, and No. 2 being about the easiest he had, he moved the incumbent John Smith from No. 2 to another district. Perhaps the patrons in District No. 5, dissatisfied with their present teacher, demanded that they be granted the services of Miss Jones again, she who gave such satisfaction there two years before—and that necessitated another shuffling. Now and then a teacher was fired, or landed a place in

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

the city schools, or went into other business, or didn't like his present district, and persuaded the trustee to move him elsewhere—and once more the pawns were shuffled this way and that.

The folks in our part of the county seemed to like the Kennedy brand of teaching fairly well, and we were never without a job when we wanted it; and to the best of my knowledge and belief, we were always welcome when we returned to any district where we had previously taught. If we left Hensley and went over to Union Township for a change of air, it didn't necessarily turn the Hensley trustee against us; and besides, there might be a new trustee at any time.

Mind you, we didn't move all over the map. I, for example, spent almost my entire rural teaching career, before I went to town, at Numbers 3 and 10 in Hensley and 7 in Union—though sometimes in pretty rapid succession. Why did we go over to Union now and then? It's not the simplest thing in the world to explain. We knew folks over there about as well as we did in Hensley—we lived almost on the township boundary line.

Sometimes we had a flattering offer from there, sometimes—well, as most church folks know, a preacher, after several years at a church, is often apt to take a notion that he's gotten a bit stale there, that perhaps the congregation is a little tired of him—in which he may or may not be right—and that both he and they would be benefited by a change. Frequently, it is the clergyman's own restlessness, perhaps dissatisfaction over his accomplishments, perhaps irritation at some of his flock which figures largely in his desire to move. Something of the sort may have operated on us teachers now and then.

Anyhow, both Father and I went over into Union at frequent intervals, he always to No. 6 and I to No. 7, I never remaining more than one winter and coming back the following autumn, refreshed but glad to be at home again.

Take the following as an example of what went on. Early in the year 1901, as I was nearing the end of my eighth consecutive winter at No. 3, a stranger drove up to my home and introduced himself as the new trustee of Union Township.

"I've been canvassing the citizens to learn their preferences as to teachers," said he, "and I find that District No. 7 wants you. You haven't been there for ten years, but the patrons remember you, and your record at your home school speaks for itself. Some of the pupils whom you taught there fifteen years ago have children themselves in school now, and they'd like to have you. I'm ready right now to give you the place for next winter at a satisfactory salary, if you'll consider it."

He offered me a better wage than I was getting, and I accepted it, with the proviso that our agreement be not made public until after school was out. It was only a verbal contract, of course; up to then and for several years afterward we frequently had no other sort; but it was just as good as if it had been written, witnessed and acknowledged before a notary.

We had a new trustee in Hensley, too, at the time, and I heard that he was saying he wanted to put his most experienced teacher at Samaria, a village south of us on the railroad between Trafalgar and Morgantown. A few weeks later he appeared at my home.

"I'd like for you to take charge at Samaria," he said.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

"It's like all village schools—large in numbers, but hard to control. There has been no order kept there for several years, and very little learning done. You have your home school in good shape, and I thought I would put a beginner in here."

"I see," said I, ironically. "You want me to take over tough jobs and reform them."

"It's a compliment to you," he reminded me.

I asked what such a regeneration job would be worth to the township, and he named a figure lower than I was to receive across the line. I shook my head.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I've already contracted for a more pleasant place, more conveniently located for me, and at better pay."

"Union, I suppose," he guessed, after a moment's pause.

"Yes."

"I wish those fellows would stay off our land," he grumbled. "Why do-you go over there?"

"Because the offer appeals to me," I said. "The school has never been abused and it's supported by a fine citizenry, but the principal reason is, a better salary."

However, after more discussion, I finally said, "If you can take care of Samaria next winter and want me to return the year following, I'll be willing to take over the rehabilitation of any school whose condition is bad, provided I can get as good money as I earn elsewhere. Such a school is a challenge which I like to meet."

He remembered the promise and called me to Samaria the following year.

Here is the exact sequence of my billets during the first nine years of my teaching; No. 10, No. 3, No. 7 (Union),

ROTATION IN OFFICE

No. 10, No. 7 (Union), No. 3, No. 10 (by this time removed to Samaria), No. 7 (Union), No. 3. No two successive years in the same place! Usually, when I wasn't at No. 3, my father was there. In the ninth year, the spring of 1892, the Hensley trustee said, "I'd like for you to go down to No. 8 next year and see if that district's worth saving. It's a small school population—only about twenty-five in attendance—and the building and equipment all run down, because we've been doubtful about continuing it. Still, those children are too far from any other school to reach it conveniently. What to do with it is the question."

Number 8 was in the extreme southern part of the township, almost on the Brown County border and six miles from my home; so far in those horse-and-mud-road days that when winter weather came on, I boarded in the neighborhood, for the only time in my teaching career, going home only on the week ends. I found shelter in the comfortable log home of Uncle Jim and Aunt Mary Pitcher, among some of the loveliest scenery in the county. I paid one whole dollar per week for my board and lodging, but added something in labor by splitting kindling and carrying water from the spring, forty yards down the slope, whenever I could beat Uncle Jim to the job.

There were a couple of hounds—not any book variety of hounds; just the old-fashioned, flap-eared, log-cabin hounds—which took to hanging around that school every day, attracted by the petting and the scraps of lunch which they panhandled from the youngsters. One day I heard a great baying outside and found that they had treed County Superintendent Patterson and the

township trustee on the stile which was the only entrance to our schoolyard; an evidence that we were in a horse-back-riding age, when stiles were necessary to enable ladies to mount or dismount from their horses without being hoisted by masculine hands. Furthermore, the stile cost less in upkeep than a gate. It had no hinges to be broken by children's swinging on it; it was always there.

Superintendent Patterson, who was slightly lame, brandished a cane at the dogs, but I assured him that there was no danger. Those lank, lazy country hounds were, as a rule, the best natured animals in the world; barking was just an evidence of their rusticity—excitement, or the only way they knew of announcing the arrival of a stranger. The two dignitaries had come down on an inspection tour and to hear my opinion of the district and its future. They were surprised to find that by solicitation among the older boys and girls, the young men and young women of the neighborhood, I had considerably increased the attendance. I recommended that the district be saved and a new building provided, which was done.

From there, after that one winter, I returned to No. 3 for eight happy years. Then in 1901–1902 came the visit to Union Township, as I have described, after which I came back to Hensley for eleven more rural years, seven at No. 3 and four at Samaria. In 1913 I began work in the high school at Trafalgar.

RABBITS AND BASEBALL

No. 10 or Old Salem, my first charge, stood in 1883 in a beautiful little valley through which purled one of the forks of Stott's Creek; a stream with great sycamores and willows leaning over it, and a byroad meandering beside it, following its sinuous curves; a road so muddy in winter and spring that not only we boys, but some of the older girls and young women as well wore boots as a protection against both snow and mud, and our schoolhouse floor at each day's close was a problem.

The building stood in the extreme northwest corner of Hensley Township—so extreme that a big sycamore tree which rose four feet from the northwestern corner of the building marked the junction point of three townships, and was a monument on the line between Johnson and Morgan Counties. The school was moved to Samaria a few years later, and all trace of its existence vanished long ago—all save that giant sycamore, which still stands dreaming of the autumns when it showered its big leaves down on a tiny schoolhouse roof, when schoolboys in gray jeans climbed into its hospitable arms and carved their names on its trunk in crude letters which the old

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

tree, perhaps with an indulgent inward smile, gently erased, after the manner of sycamores, within a year or two.

A few rods down the road from the school, on a beech-tree bough about ten feet above the ground, hung an object upon which the youngsters' eyes were already resting longingly when school opened—a hornet's nest as big as a milk pail. The older boys discussed plans for smoking the hornets out and removing the nest, bough and all, for a trophy to hang in our schoolroom, I ruled against this.

"Let them live out the season and complete their work," said I.

"But how will we know when they're dead?" asked one.

"I'm told that there's always a sentinel on guard at the entrance of the nest," I replied. "When that guard disappears, you will know that the swarm has given up the ghost. Only the queen lives through the winter."

The mouth of a nest is on the under side, making inspection easy from below, and every day I saw someone stop under it and look upward. The keen young eyes watched until one morning late in October when we had just had the third or fourth hard frost. Then someone reported to me that there was no sign of life about the nest, and I agreed to its being taken at the noon hour.

The whole school assembled to witness the process. Just across the road from the tree there had stood a saw-mill which had recently ceased operation. The machinery had been moved away, but a twenty-five foot iron stack and some other stuff had been lying beside the road for many days, awaiting removal. The stack was about two feet in diameter, and from a boy's point of view, it was

an amusing adventure to crawl through it. It now served as grandstand for those of us who were to be mere spectators at the taking of the hornets' nest—though, with no live hornets in it, this might have seemed a trivial affair to an outsider whose daily life comprehended more novelty than ours.

A strapping fellow named Jake, whom I had known nearly all my life, climbed the tree and worked out on the limb astride it, bending it down so that two boys named Dora (why so christened, I can't imagine) and Richard might catch the tip of the smaller branch to which the nest was fastened.

And then came calamity. There *were* live hornets in the nest; in fact they must *all* have been alive. With their home jerking and bobbing up and down crazily, one can imagine them stirring from sleep and muttering to each other, "Say, what's going on here?" And then out they came!

Jake was the nearest person in sight and the vanguard went for him. His position was desperate. He slid off the limb and tried to swing himself down from bough to bough; lost his hold, came thundering to earth on all fours, and without rising, dived headfirst into a covert of weeds and bushes. Other hornets went for Richard and Dora and anybody else in sight. Most of those sitting on the stack just fell backward off it, then rose and ran, their arms flailing about their heads grotesquely.

Richard had a big wool hat which he flapped about his ears as he fled. Several of the boys had dived into the stack, one after another, those behind shouting frantically to those in front to move up, and complaining as the predecessor's shoes kicked their faces. Dora, flapping his

arms and zigzagging this way and that, finally headed for the stack, but by that time it was nearly full. He got his head and shoulders inside, whereupon the hornets, with no sense of decency, basely attacked him in the rear. His howls of pain were punctuated by angry commands to the others in the pipe to "Git outa here! You fellers got no business in here! Why don't you move up? . . . " About this time a hornet got into the hair of one of the young women, and her shrieks added to the pandemonium.

In a comparatively safe position a few yards away, I was weak from laughing; it was the funniest spectacle I ever saw. When the hornets had decided to cease punishing us, we all fervently agreed to wait another three or four weeks before taking down the nest.

"Millard," said Jake, looking at me reproachfully out of one eye, the other being swollen shut, "that there story about the sentinel at the entrance sounds kinder fishy to me."

"It does to me too now, Jake," said I. "I must have been misinformed."

There was a younger sister of the young woman who had promised to be a mother to me—a sweet-faced girl of fifteen with a dreadfully shortened back, no bigger than a child of six and so frail that she looked as if a breath might have blown her away—who said to me before school opened that fall, "Mr. Kennedy, if I come to school, will you play with me at the noon hour?"

"Why, yes, Lily, whenever I can," I replied.

She suffered almost constant pain in greater or less degree, she could not run, she was so delicate that a

slight push would upset her, and withal, she craved companionship and happiness as much as anyone I have ever seen. I gave many a noon hour to her, although I was expected to take part in the boys' games and their rabbit hunts. She would bring her checkerboard or Fox and Geese, another board game, to school, and after we had eaten our lunch, we would often play all through the noon hour.

She took a game very seriously, pausing long with her cheek propped on one tiny hand, pondering her next move with complete absorption, while I sat watching her, wondering what possible future there could be for her, whether any of long duration. On another day it would be Jackstones; and the dexterity with which that little hand snatched up the "stones" beat me all hollow. Sometimes when we tired of these, we played a variant of Hide-and-Seek. There could be no running, of course, so the It would just shut his eyes and count a hundred while the other tiptoed away and hid somewhere about the room. Then, having listened carefully all the time for footsteps, It would guess where the other was.

Sometimes we told stories and just talked. Her meditations were alternately grave and fanciful, sometimes startling. "Teacher," she asked one day, "will there be people like me in heaven?"

"Not as you are now, Lily," was my opinion. "You will be there, but you will be much changed. You will be like the rest of us."

She was the most companionable child I ever knew—a real personality. But I could not give all my noonings to her. When I told her now and then, "I must play with the boys today, Lily. That's a part of my job, you know,"

she was always so disappointed and hurt that it was rather trying. As it fell out, she was compelled to be absent frequently in winter because of bad weather and her own indisposition, which left me free at such times for my companionship with the boys. Lily did not have to wait many years before she had opportunity to test my theories as to heaven.

Incidentally, the rural male teacher of those days who didn't play with the boys didn't get very far. And the more heartily he enjoyed playing with them, the better teacher he was apt to be, provided he had some technical equipment also. Boys are usually hardest to handle in school, and the teacher who remained a boy at heart could come nearest to guiding them, drawing out the best that was in them. I have always maintained that the person who knows and loves Dickens is fit to teach school upon the addition of a little training and experience; for Dickens was a child at heart all his life. No one in all literature understood children and especially adolescent boys better; he proves that when he speaks through the mouths of David Copperfield and of Pip in *Great Expectations*.

A few patrons were at times inclined to be critical when they came to the school at playtime and found me perhaps on the ground under two or three big boys or young men, several of whom in my schools were always older and bigger than I was. I was so youthful looking at the start that the first time the county superintendent, who didn't know me, came around for a visit—it was at recess—he looked about him uncertainly and asked, "Which is the teacher?"

I snowballed and went coasting with my pupils, and

took my medicine, just like one of the other boys, in all their games. Once when I had been teaching several years, we were playing Duck-on-Davy, and I got in the way of a rock thrown at the duck by one of the players and was knocked galley-west. It cut a gash nearly two inches long to the bone in my forehead. The boys did the best they could for me at the pump; I put some of the older girls in charge of the school, and holding one handkerchief after another to my brow to keep the blood out of my eyes, I walked a mile and a half to the home of a doctor. He dressed the wound, and I returned to work with a bandaged head and a headache.

Both at No. 10 and No. 3, where I taught so long, rabbit hunting was the favorite winter diversion of the boys at the noon hour, especially in snowy weather. At times it became a practice for the boys who had good rabbit dogs to bring them to school and shut them in the woodshed—where the dogs seemed to get along amicably together—until the noon hour. The boys weren't always careful to close the door, however, and sometimes the dogs escaped and frightened visitors by rushing to the gate and barking in chorus when they appeared—though their noise, as a rule, didn't mean a thing.

A traveling salesman, one of those fellows who used to drive around to country stores in buggies before the Ford Model-T came along, stopped in amazement in front of our school one day at recess.

"What do you educate here, children or dogs?" he asked in wisecracking drummer fashion when I appeared at the door. Both were swarming around him, some of the children feeding bits of apple to his horse, others clambering on the buggy.

"Both," I replied, just as smartly.

He looked down at the dogs milling among the children and asked, "And which have you the most of?"

I pretended to ponder the question for a moment, then said I thought there was a slight preponderance of children. That drummer became quite a friend of ours. He used to stop for a visit every time he passed, sometimes coming in to observe our routine for a few minutes if we were in session.

One of the Halton boys had a greyhound that was the prettiest sight in the chase I ever saw. He had no nose for tracking, but followed the quarry almost entirely by sight, and sometimes it doubled back on him, dodged under a log or into a thicket and got away. But in a straight open run, no rabbit, of course, had a chance against him. We jumped a rabbit one day, a big woods buck, when this dog was present, and he was soon at the animal's heels. They came to a ditch fully ten feet across, and in desperation the rabbit tried to leap across it. The hound took off with the grace of an airplane, caught the rabbit in mid-air and landed lightly on the opposite bank of the gully.

The dogs were never permitted to keep the rabbits after catching them; they lived only for their art. We might catch anywhere from one to four or five in a noon hour, and what to do with them was often a secondary consideration; the chase was the important thing. Fried rabbit was good food, but in season became so common that many folk tired of it, and our catches were often turned over to anybody who would take them. But there was one time when a dead rabbit started trouble.

One winter when I was at Union No. 7, we hunted in

pairs, each pair with one dog. On this occasion, when we hunted in snow that was thawing under a thin rain, two almost grown boys, Peter and Elsa, came in with a rabbit and hung it in the woodhouse. Neither thought or cared very much about it until after school, when they went to the woodhouse rather indifferently, and then each was seized with a desire for it and a belief in his right to it. They began quarreling, and in two minutes more were fighting, with the poor deceased bunny being mauled between them. I heard the row and ran out, still with my pointer in my hand, to separate them. I shouted to them to stop, but in vain, so I ran between them and received a considerable buffeting, which may or may not all have been aimed at the other fellows. Finally, authority prevailed, and I forced them apart, panting and disheveled. The rabbit had spun out of the tangle as if by centrifugal force into the road.

I spoke a few pointed words on rowdyism, and said, "Now, if you boys will shake hands and apologize, I will suspend sentence."

They did not move.

"How about it, Elsa?" I asked.

"I'd see him in hell first," was Elsa's succinct reply.

"What about you, Peter?"

"I wouldn't shake hands nor apologize to that skunk to save him from damnation," declared Peter.

"Well, if that's your attitude and the sort of language you think appropriate to a schoolyard," said I, regretfully, "then the law must take its course," and I whaled them both with the pointer. They took it like gentlemen, or shall we say, like Eton schoolboys? When I had given

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

them several strokes apiece, I looked around for the rabbit. It was gone.

"What became of it?" I asked.

"I seen Bob Van go down the road with it," piped a little boy. Bob was a much younger boy than the two contestants, and the full force of their rage was now transferred to him. They were almost quite reconciled to each other by their anger at this common enemy. They were all for following him and annihilating him at once, but I persuaded them to wait until the following day.

Next morning everybody came to school still agog over the rabbit imbroglio. Bob Van appeared with stolid countenance, and when we were assembled, I asked him if he had taken the carcass.

"Yes, sir," he admitted, readily.

"Why did you do it?"

"Well," he mumbled, uneasily, "they wasn't nobody else payin' any attention to it; it looked like they'd throwed it away—and so I jest picked it up."

"What did you do with it?"

"Sold it to Mr. Halton."

"What did you get for it?"

"Three cents."

Now, the usual price for rabbits was a nickel. "How did you happen to get so little?" I asked.

"Well, Mr. Halton said he never seen a rabbit mussed up like that one was," explained Bob. "He said it looked like it'd been drowned. He said he didn't know whether they was any market for drowned rabbits, but he'd risk three cents on it, and I could take it or leave it."

Was he still in possession of the money? Yes, he slowly

drew the three pennies from his pocket. Of course it wasn't his money; we finally voted to give it to the Sunday school.

Even a county superintendent, Hervey D. Vories, went with us on one of these rabbit hunts. Vories, by the way, presented a remarkable instance of the will to be educated. He knew little more than how to read, scrawl a bit and do a little ciphering when, at my father's earnest urging, he started to school at the age of seventeen. Under Father's coaching, he galloped through what would have been the grades, if they had had any grades, at record-breaking speed. He was somewhere around twenty-five, I think, when he began teaching, and in his early thirties he was elected county superintendent. Not so many years later he was made state superintendent of public instruction.

When he was county superintendent, he visited my school at Samaria for the first time—it was the winter of 1889–1890—and stood amazed to see the number of young men, some of them needing a shave, whom he saw thumbing books with big, clumsy fingers and scrawling sums on slates with squeaking pencils.

“Where do all these men come from?” he asked me in a startled aside which was rather an expression of wonder than a request for information.

“They are retired farmers,” I told him jestingly, “who have returned to school to learn the art of living.”

“It reminds me of my early school days, fifteen to seventeen years ago,” he mused, “when I was in the old Vories or McNutt school, south of here. I didn't know that such a group might still be seen. It's growing far less common.”

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

Far less, indeed! More children were going to school at an early age than in previous decades, and were more apt to continue, at least until they had completed the common-school studies. The conviction of the need for education was growing steadily. School facilities were better, and roads were improving. By 1890 the main roads were graveled, and many young people who wanted higher education were beginning to drive in to the high schools in Trafalgar and Morgantown.

Most of our county superintendents of those days were boys with the rest of us. True, it was good politics for them to be so, but men like Vories and Eldo Hendricks—he was head of Missouri State Teachers College when he died, only a year or so ago—really enjoyed the fun.

Vories's favorite game was baseball. This had come upon us in the eighties and completely took possession of us, quickly crowding out all the Old Cats and other ball games. I became a pitcher with a fair assortment of curves, and Vories rather fancied himself as one, too. The majority of times when he visited us, if it was in autumn, before the ground became too muddy, he took part, with all the zest of a boy, in a ball game at the noon hour. Of course we always had to stop at one o'clock, no matter how the game stood, but there was one time when we didn't. With Vories pitching for one side and I for the other, the score at one o'clock was a tie. He was as excited as a Cincinnati fan at the World's Series. He was burning 'em in at high speed—what a sore arm he must have had next day!—fielding his position with desperate earnestness, yelling instructions at his cohorts.

"Time for books," said I, looking at my watch.

"Oh, heck, we can't stop now!" cried Vories. "This

thing's got to be settled. Tell some of the big girls to take care of the school until we play the game out."

I did so, sending everybody back to work save the eighteen players and an umpire, who was also score-keeper. It must have been a bit upsetting to the girls and smaller boys inside to hear a fortunate few still out of doors, loosing a chorus of demoniac yells at every whack of the ball—for in a game like this, everybody is a coach; but we were under orders from the big boss, no matter how willingly. His team won out in the end by a narrow margin; and when we trooped into the school-room, red-faced and sweating, nearly an hour tardy, I do not believe that any boy on the lot had had as much fun as County Superintendent Hervey Vories. One might fancy that it would be bad politics—something always considered in Indiana—to have such a story spread around, but perhaps after all, there were as many middle-aged and elderly boys who chuckled over it as there were adverse critics. Vories himself evidently had no fears, for he told the story with great glee at a teachers' institute; he kept the little scribbled score of the game and boasted of it egregiously afterwards.

Eldo Hendricks played marbles with the boys and sat in classes as a pupil on more than one occasion. Once at No. 3, when there was deep snow, he organized us, girls and all, into two armies at the noon hour for a snowball battle. The two forces were lined up on the wooded slopes on either side of the brook below the school, and the object of each was to cross the stream and carry the enemy's position. The brook might have been Stone River or the North Anna in the Wilderness Campaign. The battle was joined with terrific carnage and the com-

manding figure of the superintendent as a favorite target, his eyes, ears and collar soon being full of snow. Again and again lines forged bravely forward to the brook edge and were driven back by a galling fire. Picking one's way across the stream on slippery stones in the face of such a cannonade was too much for human endurance. We were attempting a flank movement on the enemy's left when a big fox squirrel, frightened into panic by the "thunder of the captains and the shouting," leaped from a tree and spread-eagled into a snowdrift in front of us.

Instantly, our force was thrown into confusion. It was like that occasion when a spectator at a dog race in Florida threw a package of hamburger into the track in front of the racers. Our gallant soldiers forgot the enemy entirely and went sprawling into the drift after that squirrel—which, being unable to navigate in such a medium, was quickly caught, though it bit its captor soundly on the hand. When the question arose, what to do with it, Mr. Hendricks ruled that it was a neutral—and neutrals had rights then which, it seems, they have since lost. We had invaded its homeland, said the superintendent, and had no right to hold it as a prisoner of war, so it was put back into a tree and scampered upward again, no doubt with a great story to tell its family of being caught in the maelstrom of war and held prisoner for a time in imminent peril of its life.

CHRISTMAS AND ALL THAT

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THE contest between teacher and pupils over the Christmas treat continued even into my time; but the old Spartan methods of coercing the teacher were already softening when I began my work. Barring him out of the building had disappeared, though there was still an occasional ducking or pressure of one sort and another brought to bear.

But in some districts, an interchange of gifts between teacher and pupils was becoming so nearly an established custom that there was no longer any need of a preliminary contest over the matter. However, in our own little rural communities, some vestiges of the old spirit remained. From the time when I began teaching, I resolved to provide the traditional treat of candy, oranges and exotic nuts for my pupils every Christmas; but if they demanded to know in advance whether I was going to treat or not, if they exhibited any tendency to force me, I would play the game with them according to the exigencies of the moment.

When I first came back to my home district, No. 3, the pupils were uncertain as to my ideas on the subject, now that I had become a teacher. Two days before Christmas, I suddenly found myself surrounded on the

playground at noon by a large and stern-faced committee of young men and women, the oldest pupils in the school. All of them had been schoolmates of mine in years past, and most of them I had known since infancy.

"Millard," said one of the young women, "are you going to give us a Christmas treat?"

"Why, this is rather sudden," I demurred. I had already bought their candy and fruit, but I wouldn't have let them know it for the world.

"It's the twenty-third of December," said the spokesman. "Late in the year to talk about being sudden."

"I'll consider it," I replied.

"We want an answer, yes or no, now," said the young woman. "You've had plenty of time to consider it, and Christmas is right upon us."

I still paltered, and some one of the girls presently broke in, "All right, we'll have to take action. Bring him on."

A young woman seized one of my arms and a young man the other, and I was led down the slope to a shallow pool in the brook, which would have afforded a nice ducking without putting me in too deep. I went passively, the whole school following in eager curiosity. At times I had the notion of breaking away and making a run for it, but I had a hunch all along that the whole thing was rather halfhearted, especially on the part of the boys—the girls seemed much more determined and implacable—so I let the affair take its course, in the belief that there would be a breakdown before long.

They hustled me to the edge of the pool, and there the girls demanded, "Do you want to make a decision now, before we duck you?"

"No," I replied, mildly.

The female contingent blustered and threatened, the boys contributing only a word now and then and for the most part looking uncomfortable, not to say sheepish. But it was no go; and when they had talked themselves out, there came an embarrassing pause. I looked so boyish and helpless, they just couldn't muster the nerve to put me, their old pal, into that cold water. At last, one of the girls blurted out, "Well, he isn't going to do anything. Shall we turn him loose?"

Nobody answered.

"What do you say, boys?" she asked.

"Just as you like," answered one of the young men.

The girls looked at each other, and the first spokesman said, "All right, Millard, we give up. Now what are you going to do."

"Since you have been so lenient," I replied, "I'll treat."

There was a cheer from the younger generation.

"But listen!" said I. "Did you have so little faith in me as to think I wouldn't? I have had your goodies all ready and put up in packages at home for the past four days. Now you rig up some sort of program for tomorrow or next day, and I'll do the rest."

They gave me a pretty scarf and some other little mementos, and we had a very happy yuletide. There was never any question thereafter at No. 3 about the treat. During the other seventeen years of my service there, we always had a Christmas tree—which came to be a custom at my other schools, too. The going out, as we came to do, all in a body, a day or two before Christmas to cut a nice young cedar or pine—the boys had

already been scouting for a good one near by and getting permission from the owner of the land, a ready "Sure! Take it along!", to fell it—to bring it home to the school on poles on the shoulders of a dozen young people, male and female, to set it up and decorate it, all this was a joyous chore like bringing in the yule log to the homes of our ancestors across the seas, centuries ago. Even little tots too young to go to school, begged to be present at this ceremony and tried to help carry the tree. There were thirty winters when I went on these happy excursions at one school and another, and their fragrant memories linger with me yet.

But when I went over to No. 7 in Union Township for the first time, my third year of teaching, I was still an uncertain quantity on the subject to the youngsters there. The week before Christmas came, and nothing was said about the holiday until Friday. That day at noon, as we were eating lunch, some of the larger girls drew me into conversation about Christmas celebrations, and finally asked me, flatly, "Mr. Kennedy, when are you going to treat?"

"I've been so busy with worth-while things," I replied, "that I hadn't given the matter a thought."

"And don't you consider a Christmas treat worth while?"

"Only an incidental, I think," I replied, negligently.

"Well, we would like to know when you are going to treat—if at all," they persisted.

"Some might call that question arbitrary and impertinent," I remarked. "I'll take the matter under advisement."

"Until when?"

"Oh, perhaps until after the holidays."

They looked at each other ominously, and though nothing more was said, I suspected that some direct action was brewing, if I didn't make a promise, which I was determined not to give. There was a light snow on the ground, and after eating lunch, when we went outside, the boys began snowballing while the girls invited me to coast with them on a short slope near the creek. But we had scarcely reached the place when I saw all the larger boys bearing down on us, and I knew the test was on. They approached me smiling and affecting good will, while I maintained an air of innocence. Two of them took me by the arms and escorted me to the brow of an earthen bank about six feet above the water of the creek. There they loosed their grasp of me and one asked, genially, "Well, what have you to say now about a treat?"

"Nothing," I replied. I could see that some of them were nervous over the situation; the old pioneer, backwoods inexorability was showing signs of softening. And yet there were those in the crowd who wouldn't have hesitated to throw me in. But I was determined that if I went, at least two of them would go with me.

"If you won't treat, we must give you a ducking," said one.

I had formed my plan of action. "All right," I said, quickly. "Let's have it over with" and with that, I put a hand back of each of my guards and surged forward, throwing them towards the brink, but retaining my own balance. They had no hold of me at the moment—they clutched at me, but I twitched away and left them teetering wildly on the edge of the crumbling bank, windmilling their arms to retain their balance, feet

breaking over the edge, finally falling flat and clawing at the snowy earth to save themselves. Meanwhile, I whirled and darted through the fringe behind me—a thin one, for most of the pupils had lined up along the brink to have a good view of the baptizing—and they were so absorbed in watching their comrades' calisthenics that I was twenty yards away before they discovered my flight and adjusted their minds to the situation. Then a tumult of shouts, "Stop him! Catch him!" arose behind me, and half a dozen of the larger boys started in pursuit.

I had grown up in my father's tradition, and was a fleet runner. I felt sure of my ability to outrun any of the big boys in the school, some of whom, in fact, were slow and clumsy. Reaching the road, I turned into it, and running a few yards, came to a gate where a woodcutters' dimly-marked road led into a thinning forest. The gate was open and I turned in. Snow is not the best of footings for running, but the earth was frozen under it, and I could skip over it more nimbly than my more heavy-footed pursuers, who were also impeded by the twists in the rough trail, by the roots, bushes, stumps and stones with which it was cursed. As I wound this way and that among the scattering trees, I looked back at the turns and saw my pursuers diminishing in number; saw one and then another of them stop and turn back. By the time I had run a mile, I had them beaten.

I climbed a tree on a knoll from which I could survey the country back to the school, and presently could see masculine figures moving away from it, which indicated that the older boys were going home in disgust. I strolled back slowly, killing time on the way, and entered the building about half an hour later as casually as if nothing

had happened. All the girls and some of the smaller boys were still lingering, anchored by their sense of duty, not knowing what else to do. The big boys had all vanished.

When I announced that we must work rapidly to make up for the time we had lost, the silence was so acute that I remarked, "Finest order I ever had in a school." There was to be a Christmas tree program at a church a few miles distant that evening, and with an unexpected change of front, I asked how many were counting upon attending it. Nearly every hand was raised.

"Very well," I said. "Now you are excused until Monday, so that you won't have to hurry to get ready for that entertainment."

They departed joyously, some thanking me for the recess, but I could see the unanswered question still troubling their faces as they cast the last looks back at me. On Saturday I went to town and bought my supplies, and on Monday afternoon I gave them the treat, just as I had intended doing all along; gave it, of course, with enormously greater satisfaction because I had beaten them in their attempt to force it from me; while they, in turn were pleasantly surprised because they had thought that my victory over them meant no treat at all.

Thereafter, whenever I was at No. 7, the pupils and I took things for granted; I always gave them something to eat, and they in turn bestowed upon me modest though more substantial gifts. The old rugged days of contest were gone.

Among other pleasantries which lightened the routine of school life for both my father's pupils and my own, not the least enjoyable were the early spring sugaring-off

parties at our maple grove; usually in March, when the sap first began to rise and the buds to swell; some which the major portion of the school attended, when they brought their own food and made a sort of uproarious, semi-outdoor picnic of it; smaller overnight parties when my wife and I might have eight or ten or twelve guests, sleeping on beds and floors in our new home which we had built quite near my father's. County superintendents, other teachers, college presidents and laymen liked to drop in around that time, too. If we had kept a guest book from the time when Father took over the grove in 1860, the count of guests would run into four figures, I am sure.

As the last century waned, schools began to want libraries and organs to lead in the singing, and as county and township funds were never large enough to take care of these wants for seven or eight dozen country schools, we had to devise entertainments to coax the necessary dollars out of the pockets of our patrons and friends. The box supper was a favorite money-getter. Women and girls packed cold collations—enough for two and as toothsome as they had skill to prepare—in baskets or paper boxes, often shoe boxes covered with some pretty paper or other if they could obtain it.

These were auctioned off by some loquacious fellow with a knack for making what we regarded as humorous comments. The buyer of a lunch ate it with the lady who had prepared it; and when certain swains thought they recognized the box of a popular and pretty girl on the block, the bidding soared to dizzy heights, sometimes as high as two dollars. We behind the scenes were often aware of some pathetic facts in connection with these

functions. My wife prepared other lunches, sometimes as many as five or six beside her own, for girls who hadn't the means or the facilities to do it for themselves.

We bought an organ at Samaria one winter in this manner—it cost us forty dollars—and a couple of months later raised thirty-five dollars by another supper to start a library—not as pitiful as it seems, remembering that in those days you could buy practically all the classics, printed on heavy wood-pulp paper, it is true, but fairly well bound in stout cloth, prettily embossed, for fifty cents a copy.

We had yet other entertainment, too. Now and then a village school such as that at Samaria gave shelter to some poor, wandering mountebank with a banjo, a wig or two and a scrap of red-cotton curtain behind which to retire between numbers, who gave a whole evening's performance *solus*; singing, playing, doing recitations and impersonations, perhaps a bit of ventriloquism or a few simple tricks of legerdemain. He tried, and often succeeded in obtaining the use of the schoolhouse for three or four complimentary tickets given to the trustee or the teacher or both; charged perhaps ten cents admission, and next morning, mayhap with less than a dollar in his pocket, slipped away to some other bucolic crossroads where tastes were unjaded—as precariously living a mortal, I fancy, as our social picture afforded.

Recreation was ever a major consideration with me. It had always been a problem what to do with restless young spirits at playtime on rainy winter days. They must have action; and to go out in the rain as they inevitably would, come in soaked and muddy, steam by

the stove and breed colds was undesirable. When we at No. 3 were given a new and larger brick building in 1911—No. 3 had always had a big enrollment; from 120 to 140 even in the nineties—it had wide aisles, including one along each side wall and across the back.

Roller skating was popular among the girls and younger boys then, and I gave them permission to skate at recess and the noon hour all the way around the room next the walls. In some other aisles the younger children played bean-bag games, the bags having been made and filled by the older girls. Back in corners and in the entry the boys had their marble rings, and there was a pitch-and-toss game on the rostrum. We had had a couple of pairs of boxing gloves for years, and sometimes even the older girls put these on.

County Superintendent Jesse Webb was a bit doubtful as to our wisdom when he heard of these rainy-day Olympic festivals, but he came, looked on for a while and gave us his approval. Roller skating took such a hold on us—though our places for such skating in the country were few and restricted—that my wife and I even bought a pair each and skated to and fro on the long porch across the front of our house.

Meanwhile, Dr. Naismith had invented basketball, and No. 3 was not slow in taking up the new sport; in fact, we adopted it earlier than most country schools. Just as soon as equipment could be purchased in the stores, our older pupils raised five dollars by subscription, we bought an outfit, and set up our goals in the school-yard. Of course I had to boss the game, which meant that I must first learn how to play it; and though I was in my forties, I became no mean contestant.

CHRISTMAS AND ALL THAT

It was such a fad with us that we played every day in the winter unless it was raining or snowing hard—donned our overshoes, heavy coats and mufflers and played even when there was snow on the ground. It was usually a free-for-all scrimmage between two sides of indeterminate number, even neighbors who came to look



on joining in the fun. When mud made our court unusable, some of these sport-loving neighbors would haul two or three loads of sawdust from the nearest mill, to give us a slightly, not greatly surer footing.

Gradually, I culled out and trained good teams of girls and boys, and a feature of the last day of the school term that year was a game between two teams of girls before fully two hundred enthusiastic spectators. The girls still

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

played in skirts—though that was destined to change soon!—the two sides being distinguished by red or blue bandannas worn on the head; and they played a faster game than you would expect. Such a reputation did I gain by this pioneering in the game that when I went to the faculty of the Trafalgar High School in 1913, it was considered the inevitable thing that in addition to my other duties, I should organize and coach the girls' basketball team.

PROBLEMS

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I HAD a problem on my hands in the very first hour of my first school. Two of the five beginners who entered that day were twin brothers, Bert and Web, barely six years old. They were brought by their two older sisters, but they couldn't be gotten into the schoolyard. They came as far as the top of the stile, and there they halted. Their sisters pleaded, cajoled and threatened, but with no result. Presently the bell sounded the assembly, but the two youngsters, deaf to the sisterly tirade, might have been paraphrasing the bold young James Fitz-James:

*Come one, come all! This stile shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.*

Their sisters, having exhausted their words, advanced upon them, to drag them from their perch and into the house by violence, but I intervened.

"I'm going to tell Pa and Ma on 'em, and they'll get spanked till they'll wish they'd behaved themselves," threatened the older sister; she was perhaps thirteen.

"No, don't say anything at home about this," I urged. "This is my problem."

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

"Are you going to let 'em set right here on the stile?" she asked, wide-eyed with astonishment.

"For the present, yes," I said. "Run on in now, and I'll talk to the boys. They and I are going to be good friends."

I smiled at them and began to talk to them about play and birds and animals, trying to touch some spring that would open up their confidence, but they remained doggedly silent. These occasional cases of shyness and stubbornness, all various manifestations of fear, were more apt to be found in back-country districts half a century ago than they are nowadays. I continued for three or four minutes, telling them of the games we were going to play, and how we were going to sing and draw with chalk on the blackboard and learn about the pictures in their new primers and so on, concluding by telling them just to look around and have a good time. Then I went inside for my delayed opening.

Every time I looked out between that time and recess, Bert and Web were still perched on the stile like a couple of hard-headed crows. "Don't speak to them," I said to their sisters before recess. "Stay away from them. By noon they'll be hungry, and I think they'll be willing to come down and have some lunch."

At recess I gathered five or six of the smaller pupils near the stile and staged some childish game or other. Bert and Web looked on with evident interest, though they tried to conceal it. I rang the bell for books and said nothing further to them about coming in; but a half hour later I noticed that they had descended from their roost and were inspecting the schoolyard. That was the first sign of a break.

PROBLEMS

At noon their sisters said, "You'll have to come inside if you want any lunch"; and young stomachs being what they are, what else could they do? After eating, they went outside and stood watching the others play, but holding aloof from any participation. At one o'clock, they were persuaded to come in, and spent the afternoon in the schoolroom, but took no part in the program that day or the next. I had two or three little jingling-motion rhymes which I was teaching the little beginners to sing with me, and after a while, I noticed that Bert's and Web's bodies were swaying, their arms almost beating time; though they still tried to affect indifference.

Within a day or two I drew them into the children's play outdoors, to which I was paying particular attention, just because of these two. I tussled with them until I had them relaxed and laughing, thinking that I actually had a particular liking for them. Some of the older pupils, especially the girls, were contemptuous of my attitude toward two young'uns who, in their opinion, ought to be paddled until they'd have to stand up to eat their meals.

"I believe you'd lick tar off their hands if they asked you," said one young woman.

"Maybe I would," I replied. "I'd do anything to break down that shyness of theirs and get them fitted into our little society." And after all, it didn't take long. By the following week, Bert and Web, though still a bit timid, were playing with the other youngsters and were being integrated into our daily routine.

I had another case that was far more difficult; the most obstinate that I ever saw or heard of. On the day when I opened my first school at No. 3, a determined-looking

mother led in a little girl of seven whose eyes were red and swollen from weeping. Blanche was as bright a child as I ever had in my schools, but she was timid to an abnormal degree, and had never been understood at home. Her parents were of the strong-willed, not to say bull-headed sort, and had done so much commenting on Blanche's shyness that her psychological condition had been made worse. She should have been sent to school the year before, but she dreaded it, and they discussed her temperament so frankly in her presence, as if she had been a piece of furniture, expressing scant hope that she would do any good in school, that she was in a state of rebellion against the mere thought of it. As the following summer waned, her mother announced that she must make the start in the fall, and when Blanche demurred with tears, uttered threats of punishment which did nothing to improve matters.

"I won't go," said Blanche through her sobs.

"You will," was the mandate, and Blanche was not strong enough to defy it. But she was still crying when she reached the school.

"I want you to punish her until she stops it and gets down to work," said the mother to me.

"Oh, I don't think that will be necessary," said I. "I believe she'll get along all right."

"I want her to recite and do what she's told," specified the unflinching parent, "or else be punished until she makes up her mind to act like a sensible person."

"Leave it to me," I begged, and the lady departed, plainly somewhat doubtful as to my competence to deal with the problem.

I talked to Blanche gently, but could evoke no

response but tears. I seated her among the children of her age and began my waiting game. She ceased crying after a time, and sat sullenly, looking at the floor most of the time—a most unusual moroseness for a child so young. She did not come up to the recitation bench—an otherwise vacant bench directly in front of the teacher's rostrum—when the others of her age were called to class, and after two or three suggestions, I ceased to press it upon her. But I did not fail to drop a few kindly words in her ear every day, trying to make her see that school wasn't a place of terror, after all. But for weeks her obstinacy persisted. She came to school daily—perhaps her mother's heavy hand saw to that; but though she was among us, she seemed to be not of us.

The mother, who was a particularly voluble person, came also and lectured me time and again, often in Blanche's presence, until I was almost tempted to violence myself, and would rather have seen the Asiatic plague coming than she. I have an idea that the beratings I got within Blanche's hearing may have helped to win her over to my side. Anyhow, as the weeks wore on, I saw her listening intently to our recitations, though pretending not to, and guessed that she was keeping up with our work—which, as a matter of fact, she was. She was probably even studying at home. But for more than three months she sat passive in school, apparently a mere spectator.

At Christmas she received her treat, along with the rest, and listened to the little semi-impromptu program we had thrown together. And then at last the break came! One day shortly after Christmas she arose and came to the recitation bench when her class was called;

but she sat a few feet distant from the others, and refused to recite or write on the blackboard. This sort of thing kept up for more than a week; perhaps ten days. And finally one morning, in token of complete surrender, she sat close alongside the others and read a paragraph aloud; her first recitation. The dropping water had finally worn away the stone!

So keen was her mind and so closely had she followed the work that by the end of the year, Blanche was leading her class, and her mother made a frank and full confession of error. She really loved her child, but was simply of that old-fashioned, inflexible type that could not condone dereliction, no matter what its cause. For a number of years Blanche was one of my well-beloved pupils, always quiet, retiring, undemonstrative, so much so that I never had to criticize her conduct.

The country schoolteacher has many problems, psychological and physical, and he had more fifty years ago than he has now, when laws and rules protect him from many of the old perplexities. I hear they send children home from school in New York now, even for a slight case of hives. In my young days, we sent them home for nothing short of measles or smallpox, or unless they were too ill to sit up. I once had an epileptic youth as pupil, who would not be permitted to sit in a public schoolroom nowadays. The "hand of the potter shook" when he was made, and his right arm and leg were shorter and smaller than the others.

At the age of ten or twelve he began having epileptic fits, which would fell him to the earth if he were standing. He had several of them during each term of school, usually while we were in session; and though they were

of no more than two or three minutes' duration, the other pupils could never become accustomed to them. The dreadful contortions of his face and the violent jerking of his body turned other young faces white with horror and pity, and his stertorous breathing during the attack was the only sound in the room, everyone else being frozen into motionless silence.

At such times I would hold that crippled hand and rub the withered arm and leg, which hastened his recovery from the seizure. He was a fine boy, a bright student and a hard worker. His misfortune was occasionally upsetting to our routine, but what could we do? There was nowhere else for him to go to school; nowhere, I mean, that his parents could afford; and in those days we able-bodied folk never thought of complaining of such things. As his years increased, this boy's malady tightened its hold upon him, until, by the time he had reached manhood, he would at times have dozens of the fits in a day. It had long since ceased to be possible for him to go to school. The convulsions exhausted his strength, and I was at his side when the poor soul passed from the earth at the age of twenty-four.

A half century ago, children from the scrubbiest sort of homes, even in Johnson County, were often seen with redness and soreness at the corners of the mouth and around the nostrils; signs of badly balanced diets and unsanitary conditions, abetted by the rubbing and scratching of dirty hands and nails. Teachers sometimes took these cases in hand and corrected the immediate condition by washing the parts with soap and water and then searing them with hot tallow—one of those heroic pioneer ideas in therapeutics, long since vanished. As to the

conditions which produced those ails, we could only lecture and exhort, with but little apparent effect save in the course of years. Boils and eruptions were more often seen then than now, too, and frequently required the attention of the really conscientious teacher. And yet health was fundamentally good. During my thirty years in the rural schools, I lost only one pupil by death, and that was a case of peritonitis, brought on by overeating of unripe fruit.

I kept a home-prepared first-aid kit on hand, almost from the time when I began teaching; cotton, adhesive tape, clean white cotton cloth for bandages, a salve of some sort, and for antiseptics, turpentine, peroxide and tallow. My only surgical instruments were a knife, a needle, and a pair of small tweezers. Barefoot youngsters came to me every little while with stone bruises, cuts, scratches, burst toenails, thorns or splinters in the feet, skinned shins and knees; others with blisters and abrasions from badly fitting boots and shoes. A grown girl came limping to school one day with an Osage orange thorn deep in her instep where it had sunk itself through her thin shoe the day before. I removed it with my needle and knife-blade.

We still had homemade desks in some of the schools when I began teaching. Their finish was not good, and what with the carving of youth's penknives and the scrubbing with lye soap and water which I insisted upon during vacations, sometimes taking a hand in it myself, the surface became roughened somewhat and occasional splinters appeared. One day a girl of about eighteen was sitting on a desk at recess, and sliding sidewise for some reason, picked up a splinter, which penetrated her skirts

into her buttock and broke off in the flesh, a piece as large as the shank of a big carpet tack. She endured the pain for another five minutes, until recess was over, and then blushing told me of her trouble. The only thing that seemed feasible was to send two of her friends outside with her to remove the thing. I gave them my penknife and advised that they go to the woodshed or behind it for the operation.

The three disappeared, and were unheard from for so long that I wondered what complication could be holding them up. At last one of them came back, red and embarrassed, and said to me in a low tone, "Mr. Kennedy, we've tried and tried, and we can't get it out. Maybe you could do it." The bleeding of the wound, though not copious, had shaken their nerves; they couldn't locate the splinter amidst the blood and get a hold on it, and in despair, they suggested that I be called in.

The sufferer had some trouble in subduing her modesty to the point of agreeing, but there seemed nothing else she could do. It required nerve for me, too, to tackle the job; I was not many years older than she was, and feminine bodies were not frankly exposed to the public gaze then as they are now. But we teachers could not falter before any emergency, so I set my teeth and went to it. Being steadier of nerve than the girl helpers, I soon located the splinter, and gripping it between the knife point and my fingernail, I drew it forth; applied turpentine to the spot and sent the young lady home.

When I discovered one of my smallest pupils fooling with a loose "milk tooth" which was about ready to be shed, I would ask to be permitted to see it, and if reluctance was manifested, I would add, "I won't hurt you."

When it was pointed out, I would rock it slightly to test it, and if it was ready to come, I would twitch it out with my thumb and finger.

"Aw, you said you wasn't gointa hurt," would be the protest.

"Well, it didn't hurt much, did it?" I would ask.

"N-no," and delighted astonishment at having his own tooth in hand to carry around as a souvenir and boast of, immediately diverted the child's thought from the operation which had brought it forth.

Young women fainted now and then in school, and male teachers had to know what to do in such cases. And once in a while the wild grapevines hanging from tall trees on the hillside, on which one swung in delicious peril far out over the void, tore loose from their moorings in the treetops, and away went the swinger, end over end, yards down the slope, perhaps knocked breathless, always sustaining bruises and sprains, but happily, never any broken bones. Our osseous frames seemed to be tough.

And as for frostbite—but there's a story. Another advance which came in the eighties was the appointment of janitors for many country schools—usually some young woman who lived across the road or elsewhere near the building, and who, for a small pittance, scraped the daily deposit of mud off the floor, scrubbed the place once a week and started the fire every morning. One bitterly cold winter morning, when a stinging blast from the northwest was howling across the frozen snow, I arrived early at my school, No. 7, and found the janitor, Miss Lina Smith, dusting.

As we talked, one of us looked out and saw a human

PROBLEMS

figure, a mere dot, apparently standing still in the middle of the road—which along there was perfectly straight—about three hundred yards distant. Curiosity prompted us to look again in two or three minutes, and the figure was still there; seemingly it hadn't moved a peg. Why anyone should want to stand still in that subzero wind we couldn't understand. We agreed that it looked like a girl's figure—and suddenly we were gripped with fear. We threw on our coats and started hurrying towards it.

As we drew near, we saw that it was indeed a thirteen-year-old girl, one of my pupils. None too warmly clad, she had walked a mile in the teeth of that icy gale, her endurance slowly ebbing until she reached the point where she could go no further. She was slowly freezing to death, standing up! In a few moments more she would have been down, out of range of our vision and doomed to death. Only that careless glance through the window saved her.

She was past speaking and barely conscious when we reached her. Lina and I tried to lift her on a "pack-saddle" made with our hands, but Carrie's arms were too numb to cling to our shoulders. So with Lina's assistance, I got her on my back and hurried to the schoolhouse, dog-trotting most of the way. Once inside, we laid her on a recitation bench and began rubbing her face, ears, hands and toes—all turning white from frost—with snow. By this time some of the older pupils were arriving, and they aided us. In half an hour we had brought her almost back to normal. She was on the job again next morning; in fact, she did not miss a day in school that winter. And hers were not the only face, fingers and toes that I scrubbed back from white to red

with snow during my teaching career. There were dozens of them.

Speaking of women janitors reminds me of one winter at Samaria, which village, being on the railroad, had taken to burning coal in the schoolhouse stove. The usual long, rambling pipe led from stove to wall, and about every two weeks it would have to be taken down and the soot cleaned out of it. We employed the janitor's father, a tall, gaunt old man with long gray hair and whiskers, to perform this extra chore at fifty cents per. Uncle John, who always favored the line of least resistance, several times urged me to let him employ a quicker and more efficient technique than the messy process of taking the whole pipe down and cleaning it, joint by joint. Just toss an ounce of gunpowder into the stove, he said, and pff! the whole vent was clean, chimney and all. He'd done it before, and he knew it would work. At last, with many misgivings, I gave my consent.

Next morning, he told his daughter to start the fire early. When it was going well, he opened the door, tossed in a little paper packet of powder and shut the door again as quickly as he could. The response was instantaneous; the door was blown open even before it was entirely closed, the lid was hurled in the air, the upper section of the stove toppled off and the whole stovepipe came clattering down with a hideous din, while a bushel of soot and ashes was scattered over the room. Uncle John lost some of his long hair and whiskers by the back-flare, and probably his eyes were saved only by the floppy brim of his big old wool hat, for even his eyebrows were scorched.

Fortunately, he succeeded in preventing the building from catching ablaze. Thick smoke poured from the fire

in the beheaded stove, and all the windows had to be opened. It took us two hours on one of the coldest mornings of the winter to get the room into usable condition again.

I put my fingers into other mouths than those of children shedding milk teeth. The use of chewing gum, a growing commercial product after 1880, was forbidden in school hours. I always detested the stuff, but it was a passion with the older girls; the boys had little to do with it in my earlier days. It's a curious fact that in the past half century, our males have become more feminine in many of their tastes and ways, our females more masculine. Well, when a young woman persisted in chewing gum against orders, as a last resort I removed it in a summary manner. I had a method all my own. I stopped beside her desk and clamped her nose with left thumb and forefinger. When she opened her mouth, as she must do immediately to breathe, I reached in with my bent right forefinger and hooked the wad of gum out—sometimes incurring laughter from the eagerly watching audience because it stuck so lovingly to my own fingers.

Maple and Myrtle, each about sixteen, were seatmates and gum addicts. Despite warnings, I saw Maple's jaws working one day like a steam pile driver; the act had become, as it were, reflex and unconscious, so that she forgot to keep an eye on me. I was certain that the more watchful Myrtle had gum in her mouth also, but there was no motion at the moment to prove it. I walked down the aisle to Maple's seat and removed her gum in my usual way. I looked at Myrtle and said, "Are you chewing gum, too?"

"No, sir," she replied, but she colored slightly. A few

years later she said to me, "Mr. Kennedy, you thought me guilty that day, didn't you?"

"I suspected you very strongly," I admitted.

"Well, you asked the wrong question," she explained. "You asked if I was chewing gum, and I said No, which was true. I had it in my mouth, but I wasn't chewing it."

"What if I had put it to the test?" I asked.

She laughed at the memory. "It's a good thing you didn't," she replied. "I had resolved to bite your finger good and hard if you did."

A few of the big fellows still persisted in chewing tobacco in my earlier teaching years. Time was when it was not uncommon in the schoolroom, some teachers even permitting the chewer to go to the stove or a window when necessary, to spit, or worse still, to spit on the floor. Such license had passed out before my time, but there were some young fellows who clung to the habit. I talked to them privately about the filthiness and folly of it, and wrung promises from some of them not to chew at school, even on the grounds.

Yet even a few of these could not bear up under the deprivation. They resorted to various devices; contriving little private cuspidors of paper, sometimes surreptitiously spitting on the floor and rubbing a muddy boot over the spot. One likable fellow, I was certain, was solacing himself with a chew each forenoon and afternoon. One day I caught him with his mouth full of liquid, walked down the aisle, and sitting upon the edge of a desk in front of him, asked, "Johnny, can I assist you in any way?"

He shook his head and tried to mumble "No," without opening his mouth. I continued to sit there, talking about

current events, and now and then asking a question. Anyone who ever saw Chic Sale's impersonations will recall the old horn player looking for a place to spit. His problem was mild by comparison with Johnny's, who was momentarily growing desperate. There was a slight brown ooze at the corners of his mouth, and beads of perspiration came forth on his forehead.

At last I asked a question which could not be answered by either a nod or a headshake, and he did the only thing he could; in two gulps he swallowed everything—quid, saliva and all. But tobacco was never intended for food, and the average human stomach refuses even to consider the matter. Within three minutes Johnny rose without warning and made a dash for the door. The ensuing spell of nausea did more toward reforming his ways than a thousand lectures could have done.

Stealing has been a recurrent problem in every school since schools began and I believe will continue to bob up now and then until the human race is changed, morally and psychologically, beyond recognition. Young children, still unmoral, sometimes covet something belonging to another so ardently that they are driven to taking it, either by force or by stealth. Morality must be educated into them—which reduces to absurdity the theory of certain faddists that children, having but recently come from the source of all wisdom, know better than we do, and therefore should be permitted to do as they please. When older pupils steal, the problem is quite different.

Most cases of stealing in our country schools had to do with eatables. Young appetites are apt to be voracious, and if they are not sufficiently gratified, there is trouble. The lunch pails and baskets of children who were amply

provided with food were raided on many occasions in my experience. At one time when I headed the school in Trafalgar, the stealing began soon after school opened in the fall, and continued for days.

Two brothers, one eight, the other ten years old, were suspected, and presently the younger was caught red-handed. In a confession, he implicated his brother. The two were in different rooms, and I asked their two teachers to examine the lunches these boys brought with them to school. Each was found to be a brown paper parcel containing only one small pone of plain, salt-and-water corn bread, with a slot cut in the edge and one thin strip of bacon or slice of sour pickle inserted. There was not even butter on the bread.

I learned that the boys had a stepmother and home conditions in general which were not of the best. Taking the boys and their two young women teachers with me, I walked to their home, a mile out of town, late in the afternoon, and found the father and stepmother in the field, cutting corn. The father was silent, completely crushed, when I revealed our errand, but his wife was loud and voluble.

"Why don't you punish pupils when they steal?" she demanded. "That's the teachers' job, ain't it? That's what you're there for. These boys are just naturally bad, and they ought to be corrected," and so on and on.

When I could get a word in edgewise, I said, "Now, listen to me a moment, Mrs. A. These aren't bad boys. They raided other children's eatables simply because they hadn't adequate lunches of their own. We know exactly what you have been putting in them. We have examined the packages."

I described them, and knew by her flaming countenance and the angry glance which her husband shot at her that I had hit where it hurt. "Give us your cooperation," I went on, mildly, "and we will do all we can to help these boys improve their opportunities. Give them more food and variety, and I think we'll have no more difficulty." My words were heeded, and the boys ceased to be a problem.

Two girls, Maud and Inez, in one of my country schools, were neighbors, had always been close friends and sat, one in front of the other, in the schoolroom. In autumn and winter Maud always had big, luscious apples to eat, often two in her desk at once, a luxury which not everybody, even in the country, enjoyed. Her apples began disappearing, and after a time she reported the matter to me. I asked her if she suspected anyone, and reluctantly she confessed that she feared Inez was the culprit. Next day I almost caught Inez in the act, and went to her seat to question her. The apple wasn't in her desk, but I noticed a suspicious bulge under the flowered apron which she wore.

"And what is that in your skirt pocket?" I asked.

She flushed scarlet and sat silent for a moment. Then, "Please, Mr. Kennedy," she whispered, "I'll give you the apple at recess."

"Very well," I said and went back to my desk. Tearfully, Inez promised me in a private interview that the offense should never occur again. I soft-pedaled the episode as much as possible, but of course other young ears had been listening greedily when the exposure came, and kindly tongues carried the news to Inez's mother.

Horror-stricken, she called me to her home to hear the whole story.

"And you haven't punished her?" she asked.

"No," I replied. "I believe she has already had her penalty in the terrible humiliation she has endured. I don't think any further torture than listening to my moral lecture on the subject is necessary."

"If you don't punish her in some way, her father will," the mother warned me. I knew that he was a stern moralist and disciplinarian, and I feared she was right.

"Has he heard of the affair?" I asked.

"I don't think so, but Inez is afraid he will."

"I have never yet whipped a girl and I never shall," I told her. "Perhaps you and her father are as much to blame for her dereliction as anyone. She has never had any apples to bring to school. Why don't you buy a bushel of nice ones and let her have them every day to lunch on at recess? Then you would remove temptation—though I don't believe Inez will commit the fault again."

She never did. She grew up to become a good wife and mother and as fine a citizen as one might wish to know.

A similar case was that of a grown girl, a junior in high school in town, who stole fifty cents from a fellow pupil and was found out. Her mother came weeping to me, a picture of tragedy, at first refusing to believe the story; it just couldn't be true; her daughter couldn't do such a thing.

"But unfortunately, it is true," said I. "She has confessed it. The matter has been settled, however, and I had hoped that it wouldn't become a titbit for scandal-

PROBLEMS

mongers. Now, don't start agonizing and punishing the girl, but take a little blame to yourself. She has never had any money to spend on even the most trivial things. Give her a reasonable allowance of pocket money, try to get more closely in accord with her, and don't treat this affair as anything more than a mistake."

At one time, all sorts of little articles were disappearing from pupils' desks and pockets—erasers, pencils, an occasional knife, even a little money. A newcomer to the school was suspected, and the suspicion became acute. He was a husky fellow, active in all our rough outdoor play, and I instructed half a dozen of our big boys to engage him in a scuffle, pin him down on his back, and while one each sat on a leg and an arm, two others were to go through his pockets. There we found several of the missing articles, and drew a confession from him.

On another occasion a new knife disappeared from a desk. The owner reported the theft to me at once, and I believed that measures must be taken to recover it that day, else we might never see it again. I called all the boys, big and little, up before the rostrum and told them that we were going to play a new game. On the spur of the moment, I invented a few details, monkey business which I never intended carrying out. Then . . .

"First," I said, "let everybody hold his arms straight upward in air."

They all did so.

"Keep them up," I said. "Now, there has been a theft of a brand new pocket knife, and we must find it. Tira and Wasson" (the two boys on the ends) "will begin with the boys next to them and search everybody in line."

Scarcely had the search begun when the fourth boy

from the left began lowering his arms. "I've got the knife," he mumbled, and took it from his pocket. The silvery glitter of that handsome new tool, so dear to the country boy's heart, the broken, shabby condition of his own old knife, this contrast had led his feet astray from the path of virtue. After a talk with him, I was pretty sure that he would not err in that way again, and so far as I know he never did.

I never administered corporal punishment to any of these offenders. It seemed, if this be not too paradoxical, too serious a matter for that. I never encountered one of these cases of theft when I wasn't stricken with pity for the culprit. Nor did I ever expel anyone for the offense, never dealt with one whom I did not think sufficiently punished by the dreadful purgatory of exposure; and I may add that practically none of those who stole really turned out badly in adult life. We did not produce the congenital criminal type in the country; at least, not in our part of the nation. I recently counted up 101 of my former rural-school pupils—all I know to be still alive—and not one of them has ever been a subject of legal action, not one ever a public charge.

Let it not be fancied that I discarded the rod during my teaching days. There were offenses which seemed to call for it, such as pernicious idling or misconduct, defying my authority, or fighting. And I think that progress in the improvement of human behavior received a serious blow when the rod was discarded entirely by pedagogy and by most parents. The past few decades have proven that the human race is not yet ready for the correction of behavior by sweet reasonableness alone. England is a better behaved, better disciplined country

than this, partly because her schoolboys still have to take lickings when they deserve them.

The only punishment that my son Byron ever received at my hands was decreed for fighting in the schoolyard. A new pupil, a bully in disposition, deliberately upset him in mud and water one day, whereupon he rose and gave the other fellow a sock in the jaw which sent him staggering. When I heard of it and prepared to punish Byron, almost the whole school, led by the older girls, arose in protest, declaring that such action would be unjust; that Byron had sufficient provocation and would have been a shrimp if he had acted otherwise, that I was leaning too far backward in my effort not to favor my son, and so on. In reply I pointed out that the rule against fighting was inflexible, and that it must be eliminated from our schools. To tell the truth, roughness had already declined greatly, with the moving of the frontier westward.

Perhaps my dread of favoritism did cause me to administer the law too harshly in this case. I was not usually so rigid. When I was called to Samaria in 1902, as I have already mentioned, it was because my milder methods had appeared to be successful elsewhere. The Samaria school had been badly handled for several years and had gotten the reputation of being a tough place. In the previous autumn the trustee had sought to improve it by engaging a big, muscular teacher and ordering him to conquer the problem by force. The result was that almost the entire enrollment had felt the weight of the gad in the first few weeks and some had quit the school; whereupon the parents revolted and demanded a new regime.

After much squabbling, the teacher was permitted to complete the term, though with less vigorous methods.

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

When the trustee engaged me, he began giving me instructions as to my course, but I interrupted to say that I must be permitted to follow my own ideas, else he must engage somebody else. I opened the school on the first day by telling the pupils in a speech how glad I was to be with them, asking their cooperation and hoping that we would all keep in mind those ideals of justice, order and duty which would build a happier future for the community. That winter passed with scarcely a ripple of discord, and in the spring the pupils, patrons and other citizens of the district united in a request that I return for another year.

I therefore refused to believe that there was such a thing as a "bad" school in our country. When in 1912 the school building at Trafalgar was condemned and a new one started under way, the town pupils were parceled out for the term among the country schools, twenty-three of them coming to us at No. 3. They were reported to be a wild lot, and the assignment caused a flutter among our youngers such as might occur in a dovecote if it was reported that some crows were going to take up their abode there temporarily.

Everybody watched the road on the opening day in September for the first glimpse of the school bus, and when it was reported in sight, all nerves were tense. Oddly enough, the new pupils proved to be real folks, after all; shy and worried, of course, over their possible reception in the new environment. I shook the hand of every one, introduced them to our older pupils, tried to give them the feeling that they were welcome guests, and as it turned out, we all had a happy winter together.

One of them, a youth named Carl, had a bad reputa-

tion. He was very profane, he drank now and then, and had been accused of theft. When I asked him what was his trouble, he first told me bluntly that he had never had a teacher who was worth a damn. His mother had died when he was a little child, his father was away from home a great deal, he had been kicked about by one and another and given a bad name unjustly, so he said; nobody believed in him. He was feeling very sorry for himself.

I first won his promise, for the sake of the younger children, not to swear at school or on the way to and from it, and I assured him that I believed he would keep the promise—which seemed to touch him. A little later, when we promoted a box supper for the benefit of the school library, I made Carl treasurer of the fund, to the horror of everyone. But I believed that I had estimated him correctly. However, I kept tab unobtrusively on the sales, and found that every dime was accounted for. Carl was under me, in country and town, for six years, all told, and I never had reason to make serious complaint of him.

Rowdyism was declining among the larger boys, but was not yet obliterated, by any means; and there was still some doubt in the minds of a few old-fashioned patrons as to whether I was physically qualified for a teacher's job. There 'was even some occasional good-natured teasing of me about it by the older pupils. One day at recess after I had been teaching nearly twenty years, two rosy, well-muscled lasses in their upper teens, after a bit of jesting, informed me that brawn could still conquer brain, and they were prepared to prove it to me.

"How?" I asked.

"We're going to put you out of the schoolroom," they replied; and with that, they seized me, and before I could organize my resistance, they had me at the door. I tried to cling to the jambs, but it was no use; I had to give up and let them hustle me into the entry. Then everybody relaxed with a laugh and we went back to work. It was just one of those friendly wrestling bouts so popular in the country, with the other pupils as interested spectators. Apparently, I suffered no loss of dignity by it. The younger of those girls, by the way, became my daughter-in-law a few years later.

Young men and even young women, feeling their oats, frequently bantered me, sometimes almost to the point of a challenge, about my ability to lick them if occasion arose. A strapping young miss grinningly wondered at the beginning of a term whether I would feel called upon to punish her that winter, and added, "If you ever try it and I get a grip on you, you'll be like a squeezed lemon when I turn you loose." She added dire threats of misbehavior which I knew were just an overflow of spirit, for Jennie was too decent a girl and too good a friend to give me trouble.

I was far less sanguine about two boys, Claud and Richard, at No. 7 in the fall of 1885. Boys, did I say? I meant young men, more than six feet tall and weighing probably 165 and 180, respectively. They were pals, and several times just after the term opened, they taunted me with, "Would you punish big fellers like us?"

I just smiled and passed the thing off as a jest. I guessed that they were not averse to having me try it, and they expected to see me come out a poor second or third best

PROBLEMS

if I did so. The day came when it appeared that they were determined to put the matter to the test. They idled conspicuously all forenoon, looking out of the windows, toying with pencils, drawing pictures on paper or slate, ignoring my admonitions to buckle down to work. In class they made no attempt to recite; just brazenly asserted that they knew nothing and were glad of it. I saw other pupils looking sympathetically at me; they had sensed what was going on.

Not anticipating such trouble, I had let the two choose adjoining seats on the first day of the term, Richard directly in front of Claud and each having a full seat; for we were still using seats built for two. It had proven an unfortunate arrangement, but on that day at least, I was glad that it was so. There had to be a showdown. Like Father, I believed that there were times when the quick, unexpected Napoleonic thrust was the best method of deciding a social issue.

I saw the two communicating with each other with ill-concealed amusement. I strolled down the middle aisle, carrying my blackboard pointer, as I usually did—a tough white hickory rod about three and a half feet long and tapering from the grip to a point. Both young men were lounging sidewise in their seats, each with one long left leg stretched out along the seat towards the stove. As I neared them, I stumbled slightly over the poker, which was lying on the floor. Coming alongside Richard, I suddenly whaled that extended leg six times with all my force. Claud, astonished and staring at the contretemps, forgot that he was in the same vulnerable position, and with one quick step, I laid half a dozen more stripes athwart his yard-long limb. I then stepped back, awaited

developments a moment, and as none came, I returned to my rostrum.

I had fully calculated on the possibility of their fighting back at me. But perhaps the suddenness and violence of my attack daunted them; perhaps they were not as tough as I had thought them; perhaps they grasped the reason why I kicked the poker as I approached them. In fact, one of them asked me long afterward why I did it.

"I was carrying it along with me," I replied, "and turning the handle so that I could grab it quickly and use it for defense, if it was needed."

He nodded. "I thought so," he said.

That whipping resolved a strained and ugly situation for both the boys and me; for though Richard sulked for a week afterward, Claud took the reverse good-naturedly; both got down to business, and I had no more serious trouble with them. Oddly enough, Claud himself became a teacher a few years after this, and Richard is now a prosperous and highly respected businessman.

THE END OF THE ROAD

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AN ENORMOUS improvement on the physical side took place in rural education during my thirty-eight years upon the teacher's rostrum. Equipment improved beyond all possible conception of previous decades. The time came when everybody had books; they *must* have them. As I have shown, we began providing ourselves with organs and little embryo libraries. Factory-made desks—at first and for years after, always built for two—began to appear in the eighties, bringing on competition and graft rivaling that in the textbook field.

The erection of brick rural school buildings in Johnson County was under way by 1885, and went forward rapidly thereafter. There is still living in White River Township a man who, as a brick contractor, built twenty-seven of these schools within ten years. All were of the favorite T-shape, the shank of the T being an entry with a small cloak room on each side.

But not until 1911 did No. 3, one of the most important schools in the township, discard the old frame structure which had served it for forty-three years and move into a new and enlarged brick building a short distance away, equipped with a hot-air furnace. Despite our happiness

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

in the new and far more comfortable home, I left the old with a feeling of nostalgic emotion. I missed even the cheerful rat-tat-tat during school hours of the woodpeckers hammering at the weatherboarding up under the gables, for what nonsensical reason not even their red heads could have explained.

Even as the new building was being erected, doubts arose as to its wisdom, for consolidation was already under way; a district school here and there was being abandoned and its pupils transferred to some enlarged school near by, more and more frequently in town. Nearly all roads were by this time either paved or graveled, and the automobile was changing the habits of society. Sanitation and the knowledge of hygiene were advancing; old pests and scourges were being eliminated. I haven't seen or heard of a head louse in school in more than forty years; and the itch went out about the same time.

I had been teaching for sixteen winters when Father laid down his baton of office for the last time. Slowly his hair had whitened, he became less athletic and ceased to take part in the more strenuous games of the schoolyard. He loved fun as much as ever, but his jesting was more mellow and restrained. To the very end of his career, his love for the company of young people, his delight in giving instruction, never slackened. Once the threat of losing his home had been removed, a contentment settled upon him which was never thereafter disturbed.

He headed the little high school in Trafalgar in 1885-1886, and then went back to No. 3, which was more like home to him. In his last few years in school, a patron was sometimes heard to remark that Uncle Ben was not

a very good disciplinarian—but it was always said with a smile, as if the matter were not serious. A man passing by his school one autumn afternoon told of seeing three boys drop out of an open window, one after another, while school was in session, undoubtedly without the teacher's knowledge. If it had occurred to the boys that they might get Uncle Ben into trouble, I am sure they wouldn't have done it. But as it was, nothing ever came of it.

Until the last three or four years of his life, he clung to his old stiff boots; and as his trousers were narrow in the leg, fitting tightly over the bootlegs, they would work upward, giving the impression that his pants were always too short. But this or any other eccentricity of dress troubled him not a whit. When he went to Franklin, shopping, the storekeepers and clerks like to hold him in conversation, drawing out his quick, humorous, whimsical rejoinders. He might protest, "I haven't time to visit today," but he always did.

Like most old men, he became rather contemptuous of certain newfangled ideas, including not a few in education. The state passed a law making attendance at the monthly township institutes compulsory for all teachers, and specifying certain books which would be the basis for discussions—the teacher to buy the book and take his turn at dilating upon sections of it before his assembled confreres. Father silently expressed his disapproval of this law by refusing to buy the book. He would go to Trafalgar on institute days, picking up his copy of the *Franklin Weekly Democrat* at the post office as he went, and read it most of the time while the discussion was going on; borrow the book from somebody for a little while during the

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

session or perhaps at the noon hour and look it over; and then when his time came to act as lecturer, would rise and expound his views, which might not always be in entire consonance with those of the book's author.

In the spring of 1899 he retired from teaching, ending his career of fifty years at the same school, No. 6 in Union Township, where he had first taught in Johnson County, nearly forty-three years before. Unostentatious, soft-spoken, not a great genius, he had nevertheless made his impress and one not soon to be erased, upon the little world where he had his being. Thomas Gray was thinking of such men as he when he wrote,

*Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure.*

He devoted his time thereafter to his gardening and chicken raising, both of which he made profitable, and to writing local gossip as well as bits on history and nature, for the county papers. And so for another seventeen years he ambled serenely on, down the cool, sequestered vale of life. In 1904 his former pupils organized the Uncle Ben Kennedy Old School Reunion, and attendance at the jolly annual meetings of that society was of course the chief event of the year for him.

In 1914, when County Superintendent Jesse Webb issued an elaborate brochure on the progress of the county schools, he gave particular honor to Father, then eighty-two, as one of the two oldest remaining teachers of the county, picturing him twice and asking pointedly whether a man who had done so much for the guidance and uplifting of his fellows was not as fully entitled to a pension (which he did not receive) as a Spanish War veteran.

Two years more slipped by, and on August first, 1916, he came in at noon from working in his garden and lay down for what was to be the second illness of his life and the last. He lived just one week longer.

"I shall be grateful for whatever you may do for me," he told us, "but it will be of no use. I am worn out, and I must soon leave you."

On the day before his death, when we had left him alone for a brief moment, he arose from his bed and walked to the door for one last look down the little valley to northwestward which he had known so intimately for more than half a century. He looked long and wistfully, knowing that it would be for the last time, thinking how the brook would continue to murmur through that vale for centuries after he was gone. Then he turned, and scarcely needing the support which we offered him, walked back to his bed. Next day he slipped away, quietly and painlessly.

The day of his funeral brought together one of the largest gatherings ever seen in our part of the county. His old friend, Dr. C. H. Hall, long professor of Greek at Franklin College—father of the lamented Dr. Arnold Bennett Hall, then already becoming famous as an educator and political scientist—delivered the funeral sermon. When, a few years later, his former pupils erected a beautiful monument to his memory, Dr. Homer P. Rainey, then President of Franklin College, now heading the University of Texas, wrote the inscription for it.

The Uncle Ben Kennedy Old School Reunion has carried on. Last October, 1939, it held its thirty-sixth annual meeting. They take place nowadays at Beech Grove Church, close by the site of dead and gone School

SCHOOLMASTER OF YESTERDAY

No. 3, and they occupy a whole day, with programs of music, set speeches and reminiscent talks in both forenoon and afternoon, and a "pitch-in" dinner at noon. Peter S. Hamilton, who has been President of the organization for several years, is now eighty, and Miss Eunice Gross, the Secretary, is eighty-two. The real pupils are in the minority now, and the sons, daughters and cousins of old pupils and the friends who remember Uncle Ben help to swell the crowd, which is never small. Most of the old families who lived on these pleasant, rolling acres seventy or eighty years ago are still here in part, and our traditions are dearly cherished.

In 1895 I stood my last examination as an ordinary public-school teacher, and did not pass another until I had to take some special tests when I went into the faculty of the newly enlarged high school at Trafalgar in the autumn of 1913. Their new building was under way during the spring and summer, but they had a shortage of expert help, so I took my toolbox in hand—for I considered myself a good journeyman and boss carpenter, and frequently worked at my trade between school terms—and with two helpers, attacked the interior trim of the building. Because of the delay on the job, the school did not open until October 20th. On the very day before, the principal discovered that he had no report blanks or other stationery, so he had to be in Indianapolis buying it next day, and I had the honor of calling to order the first assembling of the entire school in the new auditorium. No less than thirty of my pupils at No. 3 had gone to the high school with me.

There I spent the next six years very happily, teach-

ing—at one time and another, and usually three or four at once—English, economics, physics, agriculture, commercial arithmetic and manual training. I had to stand examinations on the last three. I had begun teaching manual training when the new schoolhouse was opened at Samaria six years before. Mr. Webb, one of our best county superintendents, and I decided to introduce such a class there, though for lack of equipment, I had to take my own tool chest down to start the work.

At Trafalgar we were better provided for, and our products were numerous and highly practical—single and double trees, neck yokes, large and small gates, latches, chicken coops and feeders, porch and lawn swings. One boy whose grandfather had plenty of handle timber in the tree, was generously aided by the old gentleman in cutting and moving it, and therefrom he made and sold in his spare time enough farm-tool handles to buy a good suit of clothes.

The climax of our achievement one season was a skiff of graceful build, equipped with a pair of oars which were not at all bad. It was placed on a small pond near the village, and a charming but slightly flirtatious young teacher in the school was taken out in it one March day by two high-school youths whose hearts she had broken. They deftly upset her in five feet of water with a mud bottom. The disgruntled swains then of course had to help her out and hurry with her to a neighboring house where they managed to find changes of clothing. They had their revenge, but I considered it a decidedly left-handed one, especially as the young lady always thought the upset an accident and a great joke.

Our course in agriculture—which included horticul-

ture, dairying, animal husbandry, bird and insect life—was coeducational, and something that we had long been needing. Not all of our young men and women had the natural genius of the Johnson County Corn Kings, and the teaching of scientific farming, with experts from Purdue University coming down to do field work with us, opened a new era in our township school system.

Having been a baseball player of local note and having introduced basketball into the county schools, I was regarded as the logical man for physical director in the new high school and organizer of basketball teams. I soon had a boys' team under way and prepared to launch one among the girls, many of whom wanted to play. When I talked to their mothers, some were at first opposed, thinking it too strenuous a game for girls, but their objections were soon overcome. Their next question was, "How are you going to dress them?"

"In bloomers," I replied, which was something new for Trafalgar. They had been known to the cities years before that, and had been worn in our county by girls for gym work when no males were present save perhaps their director. But they had never been worn in public before in our neighborhood. Howbeit, the mothers assented to this innovation, too, with little demur. Times were changing.

Such local fame did our athletic training and facilities acquire that a committee of boys from the Morgantown high school—in another county, mind you!—came over and asked if their basketball team might train in our gym.

"I'll have to ask the trustee and principal about that," I said. "Who is your coach?"

"We haven't any coach," was the reply; and then as I hesitated for a moment in startled silence, one of them added wistfully, "We thought we might practice with your fellows . . . and . . . maybe you would coach us."

This was a facer, indeed. "Remember we're competitors," I pointed out. "We have two games scheduled with you for this season."

"Oh, does that make any difference?" they protested with delightful naïvete, and—well, the upshot was that they came over and trained with us under my coaching, all gratis, of course, and we played practice games very amicably against each other, somewhat like two major league baseball teams working north from Florida in a spring exhibition tour. I flatter myself that not even Fontenoy presented a finer example of courtesy.

As my six years wore on, there was never any dissatisfaction with my work that I heard of, but from time to time there were faint mutterings, like summer thunder below the horizon, from some of the newer elements in pedagogy because I had no degree of any sort, no normal-school training. The time was near at hand when one *must* have these things if one taught any sort of school. It is like the necessity for a union card if one wants to work on a railroad or a building job. In my sixth winter at Trafalgar I was a little tired, anyhow, and under the influence of that weariness, I resigned.

And so, with the ending of the term, on May 6th, 1919, the main chapter of my life closed, and the epilogue began. I could have gone immediately to another place in the autumn, for I was offered a position as teacher of

manual training in an institution in Illinois at a better salary than I had ever drawn in my life, but I did not want to go away from home. It seemed a more comfortable thing to settle down and operate the farm, maple orchard and walnut grove which my son and I own jointly. Had I known that the epilogue was going to be so long, I might have been tempted to try that job for a few years.

In the spring of 1939, No. 3, the last survivor in the township of our rural schools, was closed, to effect a consolidation of all schools at Trafalgar, and the brick buildings and grounds which had seemed so magnificent when we entered upon their use in 1911, were knocked down at the junk price of \$467.67—a pathetic penny-whittling which emphasized the desuetude into which this last survivor of the old order had fallen. That same year a \$75,000 addition to the central school plant at Trafalgar was completed, and the new order was fully launched.

I can remember when there were ninety schools in the county. Now there is one central grammar and high school for each of the nine townships, and not a one-room school in existence anywhere. Finely appointed buses, running on railroad schedules, glide over paved roads, taking the children to and from their studies in roomy, sanitary, scientifically planned and lighted buildings; and such episodes as that of the little girl who almost froze to death within my sight on that bitter morning fifty years ago seem almost as if they had happened on another planet.

In some of our worst winters there may be as many as two or three days when the snow is not sufficiently broken

out from our roads to let the bus make its rounds; but even such as this is high efficiency by comparison with the old years, when frequently the smaller children would be absent for days on end because of high-piled snowdrifts and inclement weather, and when swollen streams might even keep older ones at home. Education is being made as effortless for the young person as possible; so easy that appreciation of the service does not always occur to young minds—nor to those of the parents, either.

We oldsters are apt to think that for every gain there has been something of a loss; that there was a particular virtue in the human touch of the old Mark-Hopkins-on-a-log system of the rural schools, where the teacher was a neighbor and in spirit just one of the boys, where he was in daily intimate contact with every one of his pupils, a frequent guest in their homes, frolicked with them at dances and corn shuckings, advised in their love affairs and even their married-life problems, sat by their bedsides in sickness, helped carry them to the grave if they died and wrote their obituaries afterwards. I have even acted as executor of the estate of a patron, all seven of the heirs being former pupils.

The newer regime, in keeping with the age, is more machinelike; things are done according to set rule and routine. The state, which supplies the education, is an abstract, faraway thing, uncognizant of the individual, making its rules in terms of masses. Fifty years ago it was vividly personified for the rustic pupils; it was present right before their eyes in the form of the teacher, and they were more truly cooperators, colaborers with it.

I sometimes wonder whether certain episodes of those days could possibly occur again. Our schoolhouse roof,

for example, once needed patching. The trustee had sent over a bundle of shingles and some nails, but there was delay in getting the work done. So I took my own tools over to the building and five of the older boys climbed to the roof after school hours with me, tore off the old shingles and nailed in the new ones. Of course no one thought of asking any pay for the job.

In my last winter in the country, I was unwell one morning, but nevertheless, went over to the school, a few hundred yards away. After arriving, however, I felt unable to go on, and told the pupils that I was in somewhat of a quandary. I would dismiss them at once, were it not that there was no bus to carry the Trafalgar pupils who were working with us back to their homes. One of the older girls—bless those motherly young women! they were growing scarcer in the schools every year—spoke up after a moment's pause and said, "Mr. Kennedy, perhaps if you would lie down for a while, you would feel better. We will make a pallet for you near the furnace, and keep things going."

I assented, and they improvised a bed for me in the basement out of cloaks and coats, covered me up and left me. In the pleasant warmth and quiet, I fell asleep after a short time, and knew nothing more until noon. Some one of the girls in charge had come down for a peep at me, and finding me asleep, had sternly enjoined the youngsters to make no noise at recess, and that period passed as quietly as a Quaker meeting. I finally came upstairs about 2 P.M., and upon the girls' insistence, sat as a mere observer until time for dismissal. Everything went like clockwork. Deciding that I was below par physically, trustee and pupils consulted and decided to

THE END OF THE ROAD

extend the Christmas holidays through an additional week, so that I might make a brief trip to Florida with some friends. The small unit and the close understanding between teacher and pupils gave us a flexibility and cooperation not possible in a big educational machine.

I am therefore still inclined to think that we old-timers, despite our many handicaps, had something which the new order hasn't. Modern education has well-nigh perfected its physical equipment. It has had the advantage of centuries of experience, of decades of scientific study in psychology, architecture, teaching method, what not. I admit that it is up against one of the most baffling of all problems—that of pouring knowledge into and making it stick in a species of animal brain which is too often sievelike, too often as shallow as a tea tray.

But if pedagogy could rid itself of the fads and isms which curse it, if some way could be devised in a centralized system of breaking up mass production and working more in individual human equations, if present-day education would put a little more emphasis on morals, and thereby lean a little further back toward one of its earlier great objectives, that of the building of character, it might go far and rapidly toward creating a better world.



